

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**IMPACT OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE ON
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF WOMEN IN
NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

MASTER'S THESIS

Stacey Njeri DALIZU

**Political Science and International Relations Department
Political Science and International Relations Program**

DECEMBER, 2023

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APPROVAL PAGE

DECLARATION

I hereby declare respectfully that the study "Impact of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide on the Socio-Economic Well-Being of Women in Nairobi County, Kenya," which I submitted as a Master thesis, was written with no support in contravention of scientific standards of conduct and traditions in all the practices from the design process to the end of the thesis. I further declare that the works I have benefited from are those listed in the Bibliography. (.../.../20...)

Stacey Njeri DALIZU

FOREWORD

I want to begin by giving God all the glory for giving me the ability to seek and successfully complete this research study and for giving me the strength, knowledge, and capability to do so. Without his blessing, this feat could not have been accomplished. Once more, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who contributed to the research for my thesis. I want to start by expressing my gratitude to my academic advisers for their assistance and the crucial part they played in enabling me to finish this outstanding thesis. Without their tremendous encouragement, inspiration, persistence, suggestions, and direction, my thesis would not have been feasible. Second, I want to convey my sincere thanks to my family, especially my mother and father, who have helped and supported me throughout my career. Without their ongoing support, it would be difficult for me to be where I am today.

December, 2023

Stacey Njeri DALIZU

IMPACT OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF WOMEN IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to understand the effects of gender-based violence and femicide on the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study particularly focuses on different forms of gender-based violence that women experience in Kenya. At the same time, the research study evaluates the various causes of gender-based violence in Kenya and how women cope with them. Gender-based violence in Kenya has become rampant hence the need to address the issue and eliminate the vice. However, many obstacles have hindered the full eradication of gender-based violence. As addressed in this research, these impediments include different communities' culture, traditions, and norms. The existence of patriarchal structures in Kenya has stalled the implementation of policies and legislation put in place to fight gender-based violence. As will be discussed in this study, women's socio-economic well-being seeks to empower women to stand up for their rights and fight domestic violence. However, this has not been the case, as various cultural prohibitions exist. At the same time, a lack of personal goodwill, self-esteem, and action plans has hindered the fight against women's abuse. This study identifies various concepts that are under gender-based violence and seeks to know how they affect the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi County, Kenya. Using qualitative analysis of secondary sources, the researcher concludes that gender-based violence negatively impacts the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi. Victims of gender-based violence often fall into depression and, hence, lack the initiative and empowerment to participate in socio-economic activities that improve their livelihood. At the end of the study, the researcher also makes various recommendations on how to cope with gender-based

violence against women and suggests various strategies to overcome the societal impediments that prevent the end of gender violence against women in Kenya.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Patriarchal Structures, Women Empowerment, Feminist Theory, Domestic Violence, Femicide.

CİNSİYETE DAYALI ŞİDDET VE KADIN CİNAYETLERİNİN NAIROBİ KENYA'DA KADINLARIN SOSYO-EKONOMİK REFAHI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Kenya Nairobi'de cinsiyete dayalı şiddet ve kadın cinayetlerinin kadınların sosyo-ekonomik refahı üzerindeki etkilerini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma özellikle Kenya'da kadınların yaşadığı cinsiyete dayalı şiddetin farklı biçimlerine odaklanmaktadır. Araştırma aynı zamanda Kenya'daki toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddetin çeşitli nedenlerini ve kadınların bunlarla nasıl başa çıktığını değerlendirmektedir. Kenya'da cinsiyete dayalı şiddet çok yaygın bir olgu haline dönüşmüştür. Bu yüzden bu sorunun sebeplerinin incelenmesi gerekmektedir. Fakat pek çok engel toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı şiddetin tamamen ortadan kaldırılmasına engel olmaktadır. Bu çalışmada da ele alındığı üzere bu engeller farklı toplumların kültür, gelenek ve normlarıyla doğrudan ilişkilidir. Kenya'da ataerkil yapıların varlığı, cinsiyete dayalı şiddetle mücadele için uygulamaya konulan politikaların ve yasal düzenlemelerin etkinliğini sınırlandırmaktadır. Bu çalışmada da belirtildiği gibi, kadınların sosyo-ekonomik refahı, kadınların haklarını savunmaları ve aile içi şiddetle mücadele etmeleri için önem arz etmektedir. Ancak çeşitli kültürel pratikler yüzünden kadınların sosyo-ekonomik refahı istenilen seviyeye ulaşamamaktadır. Aynı zamanda iyi niyet, özgüven ve eylem planlarının eksikliği de kadın istismarına karşı mücadeleyi sekteye uğratmaktadır. Bu çalışma, cinsiyete dayalı şiddet kapsamına giren çeşitli kavramları tanımlamakta ve bunların Kenya Nairobi'de kadınların sosyo-ekonomik refahını nasıl etkilediğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. İkincil kaynakların niteliksel analizi üzerinden yürütülen bu araştırma, cinsiyete dayalı şiddetin Nairobi'deki kadınların sosyo-ekonomik refahını olumsuz etkilediği sonucuna ulaşmıştır. Cinsiyete dayalı şiddet mağdurları sıklıkla depresyona girmekte ve dolayısıyla yaşam standartlarını iyileştirebilecek sosyo-ekonomik faaliyetlere katılma inisiyatifinden ve yetkisinden yoksun kalmaktadır. Araştırmanın sonunda bu

alıřma ayrıca kadına ynelik toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı řiddetle nasıl bařa ıkılacađına dair eřitli nerilerde bulunmakta ve Kenya'da kadına ynelik toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı řiddetin sona ermesini engelleyen toplumsal engellerin ařılması iin eřitli stratejiler üretmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Cinsiyete dayalı řiddet, Ataerkil Yapılar, Kadının Gülenmesi, Feminist Teori, Aile İi řiddet, Kadın Cinayeti

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	: Civil Society Organizations
EIGE	: European Institute of Gender Equality
EU	: European Union
FGM	: Female Genital Mutilation
FIDA	: Federación Internacional de Abogadas (International Federation of Women Lawyers)
GBV	: Gender-Based Violence
ICESCR	: International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
KDHS	: Kenya Demographic Health Survey
NCRC	: National Crime Research Center
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
PRC	: Post Rape Care
NRCDV	: Resource Center on Domestic Violence
UN	: United Nations
UNDOC	: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	: United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	: United Nations Fund for Women
WEE	: Women's Economic Empowerment

WHO : World Health Organization

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background Information

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a menace that is experienced in all cultural and socio-economic setups across the globe and violence against women has had a negative impact on women's economic sustainability (Klein et al., 2019, p.101). GBV is defined as aggression towards a person based on their female or male biological appearance. GBV across the globe has, however, affected women mostly (World Health Organization, 2017). Most of the violence that is regularly reported across the globe involves abuse of female partners who are in intimate relationships. The effects of GBV against women are adverse. The victims of GBV are characterized by physical, emotional, and psychological abuse. Additionally, GBV against women has adverse effects on their socio-economic well-being. Victims of GBV deal with depression, emotional withdrawal, and psychological torture, which deprive their development initiatives and economic empowerment. In the recent past, GBV has affected both developing and developed countries across the globe; the victims of the violence are mostly women and children alike (Clark, 2015).

Women's socio-economic well-being involves the initiative to create and sustain beneficial roles which give power to women to defend themselves in society. Socio-economic well-being enables women to understand their rights which empower them to fight against the conservative norms of society. However, GBV affects the well-being of women in different ways, which leads to negative effects on their role in society. According to a study by World Health Organization (WHO) (2013), about 30% of women in the world experience GBV in the family setup or intimate relationships. Alarmingly 38% of these women going through such experiences die from the aftermath of these malicious acts (Graham-Bernan, 2018, p.13). It is important to mention that GBV against women statistics is different in different regions. For instance, the numbers reported in Africa project 36.6% of the global population of women subjects to these forms of violence (WHO, 2017).

There is a positive relationship between women's socioeconomic well-being and GBV against women (Lopez-Avila, 2016). However, there is contradictory evidence on whether positive socio-economic well-being promotes violence against women or prevents it. The traditional belief that women's empowerment enables them to stand up against abuse by men is not supported by research; instead, empowerment can lead to either increased violence or decreased abuse against women in society. Postmodern feminism supports that empowerment does not necessarily lead to equality; instead, it allows one to realize their strengths based on their gender. Women have different strengths from men; hence they should not try to equate themselves to them. Therefore, supports that socio-economic empowerment does not guarantee the end of GBV against women in society. According to American Psychological Association (2017), there are different dimensions of women's empowerment that are essential. They include self-esteem, participation in household decisions, social capital, and willingness to divorce. These factors mostly affect the direction of violence against women in society. In this study, the focus is on the relationship between violence against women and their socio-economic well-being in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Women are faced with different cultural obstacles when they seek help from society; these include but are not limited to shame, social prohibitions, stigma, cultural beliefs, and isolation from friends and family (Childress, 2017, p.7). Despite having well-crafted and thoughtful legislation and criminal justice system, it becomes difficult to receive assistance from institutions due to the patriarchal norms and traditions that exist in the country. Most women find it difficult to seek help from institutions tasked with dealing with GBV due to fear of the perpetrators or judgment from society. The traditional setup of society has bestowed the burden of keeping the family together on women. Therefore, women are mostly blamed by society if the family cannot hold together. The cultural and traditional norms force women to endure abuse and violence from their partners since they want to protect the family. The endurance of women is generated from their inner strength and empowerment. According to Issahaku (2015, p. 250), most of the violence against women occurs in the family setup, where they experience physical abuse, sexual abuse, defilement, battery, and even murder due to the fear of social traditions and norms. These practices protect the perpetrators and encourage them to continue with

the abuse. In most cases, dealing with violence against women in society depends on their strength to report and seek help from relevant authorities.

In African countries, there are high cases of violence against women due to traditional and cultural norms. Due to high cases of GBV, East African countries have enacted legislation that seeks to empower women. However, being a woman in these countries is characterized by unequal job opportunities, lack of education, low income, lack of property possession, and lack of bargaining power in a relationship. This hence leads to the rise of GBV against women (WHO, 2017). According to Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS) report (2013), the position of women in society has been maintained despite legislation policies being made to empower women. This has led to an increased number of GBV. The Kenyan government has put effort into dealing with GBV; however, its history, traditions, and cultural norms limit the extent to which these policies are implemented and enacted.

In Kenya, violence against women takes many forms and differs depending on the community; however, it remains a great concern due to the increased number of cases recorded. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2012), a high number of cases are reported in cities such as Mombasa, Kisumu, and Nairobi. The dynamics in the cities mostly contribute to increased cases of violence against women. The high number of unreported cases is due to fear of cultural beliefs and consequences to women. The norm of not reporting such cases exposes even children to abuse. Most of the violent cases against women are perpetrated by the people they know. Therefore, it becomes difficult for the authorities to help the victims since they are unwilling to report people they know. According to the International Federation of Women Lawyers (Federación Internacional de Abogadas-FIDA) (2014), violence against women goes unreported, which increases the chances of it happening again. Despite the empowerment initiatives that have been accorded by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, and government institutions, it becomes difficult to alleviate GBV unless cultural norms and traditions are addressed.

In order to understand and inform various policies that need to be taken to eliminate gender violence, the topic will dwell on various issues that arise in Nairobi County, Kenya. The topic will seek to bridge the gaps that exist in GBV and femicide endemic research in Kenya. Kenya, one of the developing countries in

Africa, reports a high number of cases of GBV and femicide. The country has taken several measures to curb human rights violations by coming up with different policies and giving stern punishments to perpetrators. However, the efforts to end GBV have been marred by several impediments. This research topic will seek to unmask the various impediments that are pertinent to Kenya and its efforts to end GBV and femicide. Finally, the topic will also feature various actors such as NGOs, the judicial system, society, and the government in their roles in curbing the empowerment of women as a way of ending GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya.

While there are some forms of abuse that are universal, like rape, there are others that are specific to countries and regions. Civil society and institutions of state must accept and take full responsibility for violence against women. However, this is a different case in Kenya. The government must act and refrain from encouraging any acts of violence not only to women but also to men in state institutions like prisons. The main reason why this topic is chosen to address violence against women in Kenya is that most cases in the country are culturally insinuated. For example, there are communities in Kenya where local leaders encourage wife battering. In other communities, women grew up knowing that men could beat them to express their love. I grew up in a society where violence against women was something accepted by society. Therefore, choosing Kenya in this topic is because I have first-hand experience with violence against women. In my community, economically disadvantaged women were more vulnerable to beating and sexual violence. They were denied economic power, thus prolonging their dependence and vulnerability. Nairobi County is the biggest town, represented by all the tribes in Kenya. One of the reasons I have focused on Nairobi in some areas is that it is the face of the country, and all the tribes are represented. Second, Nairobi is the home of two of the most significant informal settlements in Africa: Kibra and Mathare slums. The two regions account for the highest reported cases of domestic violence in the country. With low incomes, women in those areas depend on men for survival. In my community, consequences against women increase each day despite efforts by the local leaders, and the cost to the community is phenomenal. To understand violence against women in Kenya, we have to first look at the history of the country, hence the shift in time frame in some topics. For example, some cultural practices by some communities contribute to domestic violence against women; therefore, to

understand that there must be shifts in time frame.

B. Purpose and Importance

There are many cases of GBV and femicide in Kenya. These cases are reported on a regular base, and each time the number of cases is high. Therefore, in order to curb and eradicate the vice, there is a need to understand the causes and the impediments that exist in the eradication of GBV in Kenya. The research study seeks to unmask the reasons and effects of GBV on women's empowerment in Nairobi County, Kenya. Many people die as a result of violence each year; hence there is a need to come up with an action plan to end gender violence and promote non-violent ways of solving problems in family setups. Through this study, a clear action plan will be developed in order to develop management strategies for GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya. At the same time, the study will review the roles of different actors in eradicating GBV through women empowerment in Nairobi County, Kenya, and promoting human life. Moreover, the research will seek to review the policies that have been set through government and nongovernmental agencies that protect the victims of GBV. This research study was developed to bridge the gap in previous research studies on the topic and recommend a clear action plan to end GBV and femicide in Nairobi County, Kenya, by promoting the socio-economic well-being of women.

1. Research Questions

1. The Main Research Question of the study is:

What are the impacts of gender-based violence on the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi County, Kenya?

2. Research Sub-questions of the study are:

1. What are the various forms of domestic violence encountered in Nairobi County?
2. How do the coping strategies used by women affected by gender-based violence influence women's empowerment in Nairobi County?
3. What are the strategies employed by the society to deal with gender-based violence in Nairobi County, Kenya?

2. Main Argument

GBV has a negative effect on the well-being of women hence affecting their involvement in socio-economic activities that support livelihood. Ideally, this has been among the most significant barriers to the progression of women. The alarming factor is that there is a general lack of understanding of the triggers of this problem. However, based on the existing trends, the general customs and traditions in the country have played a significant part in the escalation of this problem. The traditions in Kenya have created a stereotypic culture that seems to condone GBV. However, the greatest concern is that women are the most affected population by this problem. The lack of legal action against the perpetrators of these crimes has even worsened matters. These individuals have become ignorant of the implications of their actions on their victims, especially considering that they are rarely held accountable for engaging in such acts. This continues to contribute to the increase in the prevalence of this problem. It is also important to point out the role that the country's economic structure has also played in magnifying this problem. With the increasing dominance of the male population in the country's economy, women have become more susceptible to GBV. This is because financial superiority gives these men the presumption that they have control over women. As such, addressing this problem begins with filling these gaps. The idea is to diversify the culture in this country to promote a more inclusive society. It is also important to incorporate serious legislative actions against the perpetrators of GBV. Above all, the general economic model in the country must also be shifted by promoting equitability.

C. Case Selection Criteria

While GBV is a global problem, what makes Kenya an ideal setting for this research is the consistency of this problem in the country. Based on the reports by the WHO (2020), 1 in 3 women in the country have experienced physical or sexual violence in this country. The overall experience and perception of GBV in Kenya largely prompt this. Unlike many other countries, GBV seems to be more of a cultural component of the country's social structure. The country has created a stereotypic culture that seems to project the female population as a more inferior gender. According to the analytic assessment by the WHO (2020), this means that the male population is given greater authority over women. For one, males have

dominated the country's economy for several years. Even with the growing campaigns for equal gender representation in the economic platform, the variation in the percentage of representation of men and women within this sector confirms the superiority of the male gender over the female gender.

The same level of influence is mimicked within the country's political system. First of all, there has never been a female president with only one female presidential candidate in this country since it attained independence. According to the assessment by Bhattacharjee et al. (2020), the percentage of representation of females within the country's political structure is also very low. This level of power possessed by men has given them the ability to express their dominance over the female population. The concerning factor is that such authority has made men arrogant, giving them the platform or subjecting women to constant acts of GBV. However, even with the criticality of these experiences, the conditions in the country have made many women shy away from confronting such individuals or seeking any form of legal action (Bhattacharjee et al., 2020). There are very few women who report cases of GBV in Kenya. This is largely because the country has not provided a positive response mechanism to guarantee these women's vindication. As such, most prefer suffering in silence over confronting such challenges. According to Bhattacharjee et al. (2020), there is also the reported fear of victimization, which is an undermining factor in addressing GBV in Kenya. Many women who report GBV are victimized or taking such actions. As such, most of them live in fear of both the perpetrators of such actions and the judgment of society and the legal system in general.

Another unique aspect differentiating Kenya from many other countries regarding GBV is the public perception of the subject. The general culture in the country seems to give men authority over women. Women in marriages and other sexual relationships, for example, are the greatest victims on this front. Generally, some men take pride in subjecting their women to physical and sexual forms of violence. As highlighted by Decker et al. (2015), these individuals feel they have ownership and authority over these women and can act however they please. This means that, in Kenya, the general societal expectation is for women to be submissive to their men. Any woman who goes against such norms should be accepting of any consequential action from the man, which often includes physical violence. Decker et

al. (2015) point out that this generally means that Kenyan society has created an environment that exposes women to GBV without eminent reparations to the men who engage in these acts. As such, using Kenya as the premise of this research provides an ideal setting as to the magnitude of this problem as well as the perfect reference tool for the actions that can be taken to address the matter on a global platform. Overall, Kenya is the blueprint for noting modern society's inhuman nature and the current society's hostility against women.

From the 21st century, Kenya ranks 3rd with the highest cases of GBV in Africa. These cases hit their highest peak in 2019, with nearly 50% of cases reported this year alone. While other countries, especially in Africa, seem to evolve from this social problem, the reports in Kenya continue to increase. The WHO (2020) attributes this to the inadequacy of support services and their inefficiency in helping this vulnerable population. Naturally, most countries affected by this problem have introduced self-sufficient social work service support to help battle such problems. The competency of these service providers has helped give victims of GBV a platform to share their problems and get the help they need to recover from such experiences, as well as the security against any subsequent acts of violence from their perpetrators.

Kenya, however, continues to lag in the provision of such services. There are few social workers and social work institutions against the country's ever-increasing social problems. This means that most of these caregivers are overworked, thus affecting their overall competency and efficiency in battling such situations. In addition, the prevalent economic conditions have contributed to a significant rise in the employee turnover rate of social workers. As highlighted by Decker et al. (2015), despite being overworked, the overall compensation for these care providers is very low, pushing them to seek alternative options to help maintain a sustainable living. As such, despite the attempt by the country to address the GBV problem, numerous social and economic barriers are affecting its ability to meet this objective.

Another distinctive factor that makes Kenya an ideal setup for this research is the general help-seeking behavior observed by victims of GBV. As reported by Bhattacharjee et al. (2020), contrary to many victims of such acts of violence from other countries. Based on the aforementioned assessment, Kenyan women record the fewest cases of reported incidents of GBV even though the country ranks high in the

total number of GBV cases reported all around the world. Considering that these high numbers only account for the reported cases, it confirms that if every woman subjected to such acts were to report these incidents, the country would register an even more significant number of these cases. However, the country's negative health-seeking behavior has resulted in fewer reported incidents (Bhattacharjee et al., 2020). What is concerning is that this problem has resulted from the prevalent conditions created in the country. On the one hand, fewer support services are designated to help this group. Moreover, there is also little action against the perpetrators of these criminal acts. As such, while these women may feel like reporting such incidents, the country has not created a favorable environment that could encourage these individuals to develop help-seeking behavior.

D. Research Methodology and Techniques

The qualitative research approach will be used in this study. A non-numerical, interpretative, and naturalistic method will be used in the research. The objective of the study is to understand the causes and consequences of GBV and the femicide endemic plague in Kenya. The identified dependent variable is GBV whereas the independent variable are the possible triggers of this problem including culture, law, family and the society. The researcher will use comparative methods and evaluative methods to understand the research on the study. The evaluative method will seek to understand the roles of NGOs and the society in management of GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya. At the same time, the comparative method will seek to understand the various measures that have been developed to minimize the vice of GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya through women empowerment.

This research will focus on secondary data collection methods from previously conducted research and published surveys. The document interrogation will focus on secondary data which will be data from published surveys, published research papers, UN reports, WHO Surveys, National Crime Research Centre, articles, news journals, and books. Comparative analysis based on the statistical reports by UN High Commissioner for Refugees will subsequently be used to enhance the validity of the findings.

E. Literature Review

There are different research and articles that exist on GBV. The concept of GBV has been defined in different ways based on different scholars. Therefore, one must understand what GBV is to dwell deep into it based in Nairobi County, Kenya. GBV is defined as the aggressive and hostile violation of human rights based on their gender (EU Institute of Gender Equality, 2010). This type of abuse of human rights happens in an intimate relationship such as dating, cohabitation marriage, or a family setup. On the other hand, femicide is defined as a form of GBV that involves the intentional killing of women by men in society. In the recent past cases of GBV have increased in Nairobi County, Kenya, and the world at large (UN., 2016). GBV is said to take different forms which include physical violence, threats, insults, sexual abuse or intimidation, and psychological torture (Craine, 1988). All these forms of abuse have negative effects on the well-being of people experiencing GBV. According to the FIDA (2018), most cases in Kenya of gender violence are reported by women. However, violence against men is also rampant but it is hidden due to the fear of men to report such cases due to social and cultural settings in the country (Cross 1998).

Research shows that culture and traditional practices can be key contributors to GBV. According to Bowman (2003, p. 843), marriage practices that promote issuing of dowry or family wealth can undermine the power of a family member and their control of daily life. Such practice gives autonomous power to one individual who leads to harassment, intimidation, and in extreme cases physical violence. On several occasions, dowry affects marriage setups since people violate the rights of their partners by feeling entitlement of ownership of the partners. In various cases, people are driven to suicide, divorce, or seeking different marital options due to cultural practices (Amstrong, 1994). Most of the African society is patriarchal and regards women as subordinates to men (Bowman, 2003, p. 852). The institutionalization of patriarchy is embedded in the African customary law hence leading to GBV in African society. In many societies, women are not allowed to own property rights or even have a voice in a family setup. Men have been given autonomous power to control everything in the African customary law leading to gender inequality experienced among the African societies.

According to research (Mbiti, 1979, p.135), some communities such as Yoruba in Nigeria, or Masaai, Kamba, and Kalenjins in Kenya allow the beating of

wives. Society had not yet criminalized the beating of wives which then promotes gender violence against women. There are other cultural practices that have been identified by scholars as key causes of GBV. Such practices include polygamy, cultural attitude towards female chastity, male honor, as well as male promiscuity towards extended family (Okoth and Ghati, 2002, p.14). Culture is the key contributor to most of the GBV cases reported. In the Indian subcontinent, marriage traditions prevent people from escaping abusive relationships. Parents are often reluctant to allow their daughters home for fear of paying a second dowry. Culture dictates that an Indian wife should stay by their husbands at all times (Visaria, 1999, p.13).

In the Arabian culture, women are killed in the name of honor if they are discovered to have experienced sexual assault such as rape and defilement (Jehl, 1999). Mostly, femicide has been rampant in most communities. However, the vice is covered up by the society and people who experience it. Femicide is often a result of blaming the victim of GBV. In many cultures, women are victimized for being raped and abused due to their gender. Therefore, most cultural norms allow the killing of women in cases where they do things that are considered taboos. Therefore, even if new laws are put in place culture prevents changes to take effect. In Kenya, most victims are afraid to come out to report gender-violence cases for fear of becoming outcasts in the society. They protect the perpetrators who see it as a normal thing. In summary, cultural traditions escalate the number of GBV cases and promote the endemic femicide that has plagued most parts of the world (UNDP, 2010). Based on several scholarly research, culture often threatens several genders-related human rights.

According to World Bank (1993), GBV presents itself as a complex social human rights violation hence there is no single strategy that can be used to end it. Instead, several strategies must be used to minimize and manage GBV. Due to the dynamic nature in which GBV occurs in the society, diverse strategies ought to be implemented to ensure it is properly managed. The context in which the violence occurs differs based on the community and society, hence measures that are imposed depend on the circumstances in which they are implemented (UN, 1993). There are different actors who come up with strategies and ways to deal with GBV at different levels. In a family setup, the actors include men, women, and children. At a

community level, the actors include elders, religious leaders, community-based groups, and social organizations. At each level, actors have different strategies that they employ to solve GBV (Heise et al., 2002). Hence the involvement of each player contributes to the eradication of GBV in the society (Jewkes, 2015, p.1583). The judicial system, the police, the legislature, and the government also play a key role in developing strategies to deal with GBV in a social setup (Hoffman, 1993). It is evident that one strategy is not enough to eradicate GBV. Therefore, each player in the society should be involved at different levels to curb the vice of GBV.

According to FIDA (2001), Kenya has made great strides in the fight against GBV. However, the policies set up have not been enough in ending GBV up to date. More often the victims of GBV are referred to community administration such as chiefs where they do not get any help (Green et al, 2015). At the same, they lack legal representation to ensure they get justice. Despite developing policies and protection of human rights in the 2010 constitution, GBV cases have increased and become rampant in Kenya. The Kenyan media reports many cases of GBV and deaths due to domestic violence. A study conducted by Nation Crime Research Centre (2021) showed that the cases of domestic violence had increased by 40% during the COVID-19 pandemic. The high numbers need to be addressed to protect human rights and preserve human life.

According to feminist theory, GBV occurs due to societal discrimination against women (Lettellier, 1994). This means that the more inequality between men and women is propagated in the society the more likely that women will be abused by men. Feminist theory shows that the patriarchal system is the root cause of GBV against women (FIDA, 2014). The illusion that men are superior to women causes inequality leading to domestic violence and discrimination against women. According to feminist theory, GBV is caused by systemic discrimination (Indra, 1995). A deeper understanding of feminist theory shows that empowering women can bring about change in dealing with violence against women. By improving the socio-economic well-being of women, the victims of GBV are able to stand up for themselves in the society (Fall et al, 2010). This study will focus on feminist theory to seek various interventions and action plans that are used in Nairobi County, Kenya to curb GBV.

Feminist perspectives seek to understand the power that masculinity holds

against femininity on a global perspective. Feminism in international relations offers a common platform in which they show what is happening on a global scale and innovative ways to cope with it (Waylen, 2006, p. 145). Feminism globally, intends to eradicate the inequalities that exist in the society by empowering one another. Mostly, feminists empower women to fight for equality in a society that is built on patriarchal structures. Feminism brings about the changes that a society needs to empower women to stand up for their rights. Feminist theorists intend to unite against masculinity by empowering women who seek to hold power in relationships. However, there exist differences among different feminist scholars. Some seek to unite as a movement to come up with solutions on a united front while others argue that only individuals can change social norms. There are those feminist scholars who seek to bring down the cultural norms that identified men as superior to women and emphasize equality. On the other hand, some feminists feel the need to embrace cultural gender differences and seek strength in them (Waylen, 2006, p. 154). However, the main point is to empower women to find their space in the society. These efforts are often meant to minimize violence against women in the society. This study evaluates the relationship between feminism, GBV, and women's socioeconomic wellbeing.

More importantly, this study will focus on cultural and postmodern feminist theories to demonstrate how GBV affects women's empowerment in the society. Cultural feminism seeks to recognize the feminine traits of women that have not been recognized in a patriarchal society (Wolf, 2007). Cultural feminism seeks to embrace the differences that exist between men and women. On the other hand, postmodern feminist theory argues that gender imbalances are promoted by culture and society instead of biology. Postmodern feminist theory also argues that women experience oppression in different ways hence the model critiques collective action (Frug, 2014). These two theories of feminism seem to critique radical feminism which focuses on equality based on biological differences between women and men instead of traits, culture, and social acceptance.

F. Limitations of the Study

During this study, the researcher experienced various limitations. At the same time, various measures were put up to deal with the limitations of the study. One of

the limitations in this study is that some of the sources used may present biases and prejudice. The researcher addressed this limitation by verifying the information and counter-checking the information from other different sources. The second limitation is that the parameters used in different sources used in this study might have been passed by time. Therefore, the evidence and sources used might apply at the time of publication but not apply at the time this research was carried out. In addressing this limitation, the researcher used the most recent sources that collaborate with the earlier published sources. Thirdly, the research is only limited to Nairobi County, Kenya; therefore, the research does not reflect and cannot be used to conclude any other place except Nairobi County. Finally, the study is limited to secondary data sources only. The researcher was unable to collect and use primary data due to the high costs and long time required to conduct primary research. However, to eliminate biases and incorrect data the study was conducted using authenticated secondary sources which were published in different years. Despite, indicating various limitations, the authenticity and originality of this research study are guaranteed by the researcher. Subsequently, although the research covers the period between 2000 and 2022, the COVID-19 period has also been excluded to ensure the reliability of the findings. The goal behind the exclusion of this period is that it does not project an accurate assessment of the trends in GBV. Ideally, the pandemic's implications altered the targeted population's general behavior. This means that there could be higher reports of GBV than could be projected in an ordinary year. As such, this report analyses the years before and subsequently after the pandemic.

G. Order of the Study

This research is structured into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction part. Introduction chapter is composed of various subsections which include the background of the study, the purpose and importance of the study, methods and techniques used in the study, literature review, and limitations of the study. The background of the study subsection covers the various issues from a broader perspective that have led the researcher to focus on the topic. The purpose and importance subsections cover the main issues of the study which include the research questions and main arguments. The methods and techniques subsection indicates the various ways used to conduct this research. The literature review

analyzes and reviews various research and articles that have been written by scholars regarding the topic. Finally, the limitations of the study subsection enlighten the reader on various barriers that the researcher faced in the cause of conducting this research.

The second chapter covers the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the research study. The conceptual framework focuses on various concepts about GBV which include culture, patriarchal structures, femicide, causes and effects of GBV and socio-economic well-being of women. Conceptual framework discusses as well as distinguishes the differences between the independent and dependent variables in this study. The theoretical framework focuses on feminist theory particularly the cultural and postmodern feminism. The theories in this chapter seek to understand the concept of GBV and its relationship to women empowerment.

The third chapter discusses the historical framework and evolution of GBV in Kenya. One of the topics discussed in this chapter include the cultural background of the communities living in Nairobi regarding GBV. The other topic discussed education background of women living in Nairobi County in relation to GBV. The chapter also discussed the women's income levels and socio-economic opportunities that exist for women in Kenya in relation GBV. These subsections discuss the historical background of each issue addressed and how it has evolved over time in Kenya and particularly Nairobi County. The basic objective of this chapter is to understand how various variables have contributed and affected socio-economic well-being of women and GBV in Nairobi County.

The fourth chapter focuses on the findings of the research study. The chapter analyses the various cases of GBV that are reported in Nairobi County. Such cases include sexual harassment, economic deprivation, battery, and femicide. This topic will also review various strategies that women use to cope with and curb GBV. Moreover, the chapter will review the effective empowerment strategies used by women in Nairobi. In summary, the chapter will endeavor to review the findings of the study regarding the research questions.

The fifth and the last chapter is the conclusion. This chapter summarizes the entire research study and the conclusions that can be drawn from the research findings. The conclusion restates the research questions and shows how the study has answered them from the findings. The chapter also restates the cultural and

postmodern feminism about GBV. At the same time, this chapter offers various recommendations on how to deal with GBV against women as well as how socio-economic empowerment can be used to fight against violence against women.

II. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section of the study covers the theoretical framework in relation to the implications of GBV and femicide on the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi County. The assessment covers this problem's cultural context, showing how culture plays a significant role in the prevalence of GBV. Moreover, there is also an intensive analysis of the patriarchal structure projected in this society. The overall projection is that the general social structure in Nairobi unveils the males as the more dominant and superior gender, thus, neglecting the needs and interests of women in the county.

Subsequent assessment in this section of the research is based on the concept of femicide. Despite the growing concern about the biased nature of the social structure in this region, femicide projects the extreme extent of the impacts of this problem. The discussion in this case is that there are increasing incidences of women being killed just for belonging to this gender. The alarming concerns in relation to the aforementioned issues are how the problems have negatively impacted the socio-economic well-being of these women. The county has become a hostile environment for women thwarting their ability to progress socially and economically. Generally, while the male population continues to advance, the women are left to feed off the spoils of this community. The projected behavior pattern reflects the context of both the cultural and postmodern feminist theories. Cultural feminism in this case describes the general female nature. The theory in this case command differences between male and female gender thus explaining the variation in the behavior of both genders in their attempt to increase their value in the society. The postmodern feminist theory on the other hand provides the explanation to the observed extent of gender inequality in the modern society. These two theories therefore present the perfect front for explaining the origin of GBV and femicides thus making it easier to define their impacts and establish intervention actions that could help deal with these issues.

A. Conceptual Framework

This section of the research paper discusses some of the concepts used in the study. This study has been conceptualized according to given explanations using different theories. Cultural feminism theory guided in understanding GBV in Kenya.

1. Culture

Culture identifies the historical background of people through which they practice their beliefs and traditions (Harcourt 2006). Culture defines the identity of people. In Kenya, there are many cultural traditions that exist especially in Nairobi City. These cultures define the history, success, achievements, and practices of the people. Despite having positivity in the society, culture can also promote detrimental practices such as GBV against women. In most African countries, GBV has been perpetuated by cultural beliefs. As highlighted by Harcourt (2006), these beliefs have led to violence against women in most parts of Africa. Culture and tradition create trends of behavior that is acceptable to the society. The norms and traditions are handed from one generation to another. Cultural practices and traditions can have negative or positive impact on the behavior of people in the society. Culture is also a basis on which social relationships exists. Therefore, it influences the GBV against women in the society.

African culture is a model for how members of society should conduct themselves. It establishes social norms for both men and women. Abuse of women has a long history in African culture and tradition. In many Kenyan communities, there is opposition to gender equality in romantic relationships. With reference to the provision of most Kenyan communities overlook sexism and misogyny in their social-cultural dynamics. Women are perceived as being beneath men. Most cultural societies considered women and children to be a man's property. The guy controlled the structure of the family. According to Harcourt (2006), the total number of spouses and children they had was included in any calculations of his riches. This empowered men over women. Many societies teach women to revere and fear men. GBV against women has become more prevalent because of the power that their cultures have granted to men. In Kenya, some traditional customs encouraged beating women to promote discipline. The cultural beliefs that underpin African civilization have enabled the mistreatment of women. It is challenging to combat

violence against women because of these ingrained cultural beliefs that have been passed down from one generation to the next.

According to African traditional beliefs, women are tasked with holding the family together and taking care of the children. This belief limits the empowerment of women to venture into self-growth initiatives. The culture of women taking care of the family dictates the way of life hence promoting abuse and violence in marital relationships. Most women are forced to endure abuse and violence due to their kids and for the fear of judgment from the society. Based on the reports by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), most women endure violence in a family set up for the protection of children (UNDP, 2007). Others are in abusive relationship for the fear of societal judgment. The cultural beliefs support perpetrators of violence and silence the victims. Most of the broken marriages are blamed on women in a Kenyan society. The cultural doctrines that force women to protect their family honor and sanctity results to increased GBV against women in Kenya. Despite having legal frameworks to address GBV, culture is the greatest impediment to legal progress. Most cultures prevent women from standing against men in the society. The society forces women to report abusive cases to council of elders who side with the perpetrators of the violence. Women who report abusive cases are victimized and demonized hence forcing them to stay in abusive marriages. The cultural dynamics in Kenya makes a taboo for a woman to report their husband to the authorities instead of solving their marriage issues through the council of elders. These cultural traditions perpetuate GBV against women in Kenya. Most cases that have been reported remain unsolved due to cultural impediments. At the same time, these cultural beliefs give the perpetrators power over the victims through violence.

In Kenyan communities, dowry is given to family of the wife by the husband. The cultural significance of dowry prohibits a woman from leaving her husband and going back to her parents. The dowry in most cultural beliefs shows that the man owns the woman. The doctrine of dowry during marriage perpetuates GBV against women. The exchange of women with property gives the men the right to do anything to their wives. In many traditions, when a woman goes back to her family after dowry has been paid, the wife's parents must give back the dowry. Therefore, many women who are in abusive marriages are rejected by their parents whenever they seek help from them. These cultural traditions have promoted GBV in Kenya.

Most women who are in a relationship experience GBV in form of sexual assault, battery, emotional abuse, and economic deprivation. Many cultures argue that a man cannot rape his wife since they are in a marriage. The cultural norms and doctrines have led to increased cases of GBV against women. Men are supported by these cultural traditions which support their behavior against women. Women empowerment to seek justice and speak out is also suppressed by the cultural practices. Many parents have rejected to offer their daughters help due to cultural traditions. They force the women to endure violence which sometimes leads to loss of life Issahaku (2015).

Culture and traditional norms are pillars of any society. However, sometimes negative dimensions of culture can promote bad behavior and result to harming some people in the society. The cultural practice that promotes inequality based on gender is the root cause of increased cases of GBV against women in Nairobi. These practices have been passed from generation to generation. They have suppressed women empowerment in the society through abuse and violence. The perpetrators are supported by cultural doctrines that undermine the role of women in the society. Women are afraid to stand up for their rights due to fear that has perpetuated by the society. The increased GBV against women will continue to negatively affect women's economic well-being if the cultural norms are not addressed to align with gender equality.

2. Culture and Patriarchal Society

Patriarchy is defined as an ideology that portrays men as superior beings to women in all aspects of life (Waugh, 2012). In most societies, patriarchy has been the source of GBV against women. Societies that promote patriarchal structures have reported many cases of GBV against women and disparities. According to Waugh, (2012), these structures have existed for as long as humans' existence. The flawed male dominance has been the primary source of GBV against women in most societies. The African traditional beliefs promote patriarchy and subjugation of women. The patriarchal structures have often undermined the legal frameworks that are put in place to fight against GBV. In Kenya, the patriarchal structures undermine the efforts of policy makers to promote gender equality and fight against GBV. The structures that exist in Kenyan society favor men as compared to women.

However, the context of this problem stretches beyond the borders of Nairobi or even Kenya. The entire global structure has created a male dominated society undermining the value and interest of women in the community. For instance, according to Harcourt (2006), in a family set up men are considered as the head of the family in almost every community. Women had to submit to their husbands and had no influence over family decisions. When it comes to women in a family structure, the culture has long worshipped men as superior beings. In the household, women are not supposed to participate in decision-making. The responsibility of a woman is to care for her husband and children. They are assigned the household chores while the men handle the family's finances. When women are undervalued in a family structure, it often results in sexual assaults, financial exploitation, physical abuse, and emotional abuse. In case their wives disrespect them, a male is allowed by society to correct them. The majority of the time, those who experience GBV hold themselves responsible for the behavior of the offenders. According to research conducted in Rongai by Kibiti (2015), the majority of women who were physically abused by their husbands said they deserved it since they had insulted them. Violence to the same degree is accepted practically everywhere in the world. It is clear that international traditions have established a system in which women are not permitted to criticize a man's behavior. According to Kibiti (2015), this patriarchal worldview has made men feel superior to women, which has contributed to the prevalence of GBV around the world.

Nearly every region of the world, including Kenya, bases its marriage customs on patriarchal principles. For instance, in the majority of developing countries, marriage is centered around courting, discussions with the bride's parents, dowry payment, the wedding, and finally the bride's transfer to the groom's home. Even the industrialized countries embrace this tradition, which is essentially aimed at giving men control over women by considering them as commodities that can be traded through barter, notwithstanding variations in practices in this context. Due to the part, he performs during the entire process, the groom is given power in marriage. Many societies around the world, according to discussions by Frug (2014), do not include the bride in negotiations and bride price payment. Elders bargain over what the groom should pay for the bride during the talks, which are seen as a masculine affair. The dowry ceremony has typically been commercialized, with the elders

giving the bride money in exchange for payment from the groom. By engaging in these customs, the groom gains control over his wife and kids. They treat them as their property, which causes aggression towards women in marriages. When the bride price is paid, the woman is given a lower status in the marriage structure because the husband is paying for her. The majority of women who report incidences of GBV are legally wed and have given their parents money (Frug, 2014). Men have the authority to view women as their property because they believe they have paid for them, thanks to society. Therefore, they have the right to treat them anyway they like, including by beating, abusing, raping in marriage, and depriving them.

According to the African traditions, women move from their parents' homes live in their groom's homes. They lose their home, identity and adopt that of the husband. This act forces the women to surrender their power to the men. Despite a woman coming from a domicile family, they are required by the law of nature to move to man's house. This leads to women being subordinate beings in the marriage relationship. Even in courtship, men consider going to a woman's house as demeaning. The society has brought up men to become economically independent and should not be kept by a woman. It is apparent that the patriarchal idea has given rise to countless occurrences of violence against women, particularly for residents of Nairobi, Kenya, even if the idea is a cause for concern on a global scale due to its role in the recurrent cases of GBV. For those who have families, Nairobi city presents numerous economic difficulties. Anyone without a steady employment finds it difficult to make ends meet. Therefore, it becomes challenging for those in relationships when a male is unable to support the family. Conflict and violence against women originate from a man's incapacity to support his family (Harcourt, 2006).

Based on this assessment, the patriarchal structures support sexual superiority of men over women. Men's infidelity is celebrated while sexual pleasure for women is condemned. The society considers polygamy as a way of men while women who are unfaithful are condemned by the society. In most cases, when men sleep with many women, they do it as female conquest and subjugation. The women are condemned for such practices and punished by the society. In Nairobi, Kenya these patriarchal beliefs result to violence against women and in many cases have resulted to murder. Many women who have been found unfaithful to their husbands have

ended up being killed. Many cases of infidelity results to GBV against women. Women who are unfaithful are considered outcasts in the society and risks disinheritance by their parents. The society has given patriarchal power to men which support GBV against women.

3. Femicide

Femicide is the murdering of women for reasons related to their gender (Stockl, 2013). The act is undertaken in an effort to oppress women in society. Femicide is defined as the murdering of a woman by a man in this research. Femicide is one of the leading causes of mortality for women worldwide, according to Stockl (2013). Intimate relationships are the setting for many femicide incidents. Most abusive relationships end in homicide. Male partners who are violent are more likely to kill their mates accidentally or intentionally. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) study from 2013 lists African nations as having a high rate of femicide instances. However, it is challenging to find these femicide cases. Most nations do not categorize killings by gender. The statistical information was gathered from incidences of GBV against women that were reported. Women who are in intimate relationships run a higher risk of being murdered by their spouses, claim Johnson and Dawson (2011).

According to a global statistical analysis, killing women and girls who are in romantic relationships seldom happens at random. People opt to disregard the warning signs and symptoms that an intimate relationship is about to end. The majority of femicides are the result of long-term physical abuse and violence by the partners. A lengthy history of GBV is to blame for the majority of femicide incidents that have been reported globally. Accidents or spontaneous responses are uncommon causes of female homicide. According to Johnson and Dawson (2011), the leading cause of women's killings worldwide has been identified as GBV against women. Most women who ignore GBV in relationships end up dead or handicapped. The death of women in abusive relationships results from excessive physical violence and suicides due to psychological torture. According to FIDA (2018), many cases of femicide that have been reported around the world were as a result of GBV. Most of the women who report physical violence from their partners end up dead from trauma and physical injuries.

4. Socio-Economic Wellbeing of Women

The ability of women to support themselves financially by positive actions is referred to as socio-economic wellness, according to Johnson and Dawson (2011). Similar to women's economic empowerment is socioeconomic. Women's empowerment is the process of enhancing women's self-worth, empowering them to make decisions for themselves, alter the world, and engage in politics. When addressing GBV against women, women's empowerment has been a broad topic. Regarding GBV against women, the dependent variable of women's empowerment has frequently been considered. Recognizing the issue of GBV depends heavily on the empowerment of women. It is not well understood if GBV against women is positively or negatively influenced by women's socioeconomic status. GBV can affect women's socioeconomic well-being in any situation.

Women's socioeconomic status has long been seen as one of the interventions against GBV. Numerous research on gender analysis have demonstrated that reducing GBV in society can be achieved by enhancing women's socioeconomic well-being (Mejia et al., 2014). The study by Johnson and Dawson (2011), however, indicate ambiguity regarding the link between GBV and the economic empowerment of women. These studies demonstrate that the danger of GBV in intimate relationships can rise as women's socioeconomic status improves. According to these studies, women's empowerment endangers the household's power dynamics. Men therefore use violence against women to demonstrate their dominance and power. Sometimes strong women make men feel nervous because they challenge their authority. Men in these relationships demonstrate their manhood by abusing women. Evidence in this instance demonstrates that increasing the socioeconomic status of women encourages GBV against them in intimate relationships. As an alternative, Johnson and Dawson (2011) provide research showing that greater empowerment lowers the likelihood that women will encounter violence since greater educational or financial empowerment affords higher status in the household. Despite the fact that Gagnier (1990) found that women's economic empowerment raises their status and lessens their vulnerability to GBV, other studies have found a link between women's increased access to resources for income and livelihood and a higher reporting of increased conflict and GBV.

Hillenkamp (2015) notes that an increase in levels of education is associated

with women's empowerment. For women to challenge gender issues, education becomes an important factor. However, so much is needed to change society's attitudes and norms (Adname, 2015). This shows that women's employment opportunities and education decisions in society are either made by their husbands, parents, or brothers. Marriage institution continues to lose value and importance as women cannot control decisions on property and income. Educated women are powerful and enhance their prosperity and those close to them. Women who have gone to school tend to have advantageous families compared to those who have not. School and basic training for women teach them their rights and how to fight for them. However, it is unfortunate that educated women are less than men.

Kongolo (2012) studied some factors limiting women's participation and involvement in key developments. According to the study, most women in rural areas do not have access to education. The study was conducted in Ithuseng, South Africa. The women get involved in developmental work without knowing anything because they need more innovations, initiatives, attitudes, and self-reliance. The women are isolated and kept in the dark on development-related information. Strengthening women financially impacts their lives and society as a whole. In some African families, a lot of women spend nearly half of their income on instructing and sustaining their younger siblings. Women's monetary freedom is paramount as it helps to check the dismissal and segregation of human rights and abuse. According to Moindi (2012), women are outnumbered by men, and thus, they continue to lack control and access to opportunities and resources in society. The study was conducted in Mvita, Mombasa County in Kenya. Nowadays, women's involvement in earning and economic activities to support family affairs continues to gain a lot of importance. A man is considered as the breadwinner in the family. However, as the high cost of living hits urban areas, the inflation rate, children's education, and family expenditure, women are expected to contribute to running family affairs. Empowering women is both an economic and participation opportunity (Ferguson, 2011).

Women worldwide, across the lines of culture and income class, are normally subjected to sexual, physical, and psychological abuse. Globally, one in every three women has been coerced into sex, beaten, or abused physically. Most of these forms of violence and abuse against women come from close friends or family members.

According to UN (2000), nearly 5,000 women are killed annually through rape or 'honor killings'. In the Philippines and Costa Rica, 49% and 33% of physically abused women are beaten by their husbands or partners during pregnancy. Six thousand women are killed annually in India as their in-laws think their dowry is insufficient (UN, 2000). Each country, or rather continent, has its share of women's violence. Different cultures tolerate or condone some amount of female violence. With such acceptance, women will continue lagging behind men economically. A society supporting women economically is far ahead of one where women are seen as less than men. Some African communities perceived the wife as a stranger or intruder in the husband's family (Steinzor, 2003). If the husband dies, the wife is thrown away without inheriting anything. The widow is impoverished and sometimes subjected to cultural practices like wife inheritance.

Kenya still has a lot of gender-related challenges, both men and women. The Family Protection Bill, published in 2001, protects domestic violence victims. However, physical abuse and marital rape have not been considered well. Despite many issues affecting women being addressed in the legal framework, we have only witnessed a few legislations being enacted. Although the government has demonstrated its desire to achieve gender equality in society, it is yet to be demonstrated through implementation. One out of five women experience violence from their husbands: 16% experience sexual violence, and 40% experience physical violence (Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2003). This report also shows that the major barrier in addressing and handling domestic violence against women is cultural practice rather than policies. Domestic violence has long locked out opportunities and potential growth for women who cannot achieve their best because of their husband's reactions. For society to move on and develop, women must be supported to work and reach their full potential. Job allocation should be based on merits and not on gender basis.

B. Theoretical Framework

This research section will cover the theoretical principles associated with the topic. The idea is to understand the general premise of the subject to improve its overall understanding. The main focus will be on feminism as the theoretical framework for understanding GBV against women and the essence of navigating this

problem. The conceptualization of these theories provides the framework for projecting a deeper understanding of the issue.

1. Feminism

Feminism is defined as interdisciplinary social model that deals with issues of gender equality and equity, gender identity, sex, and sexuality. Feminism evolves from inequality between sexes to a more complex examination of social imbalances due to gender disparities (Delmar, 2018, pp. 5-28). Feminist theorists seek to affect changes where inequalities are felt the most based on gender inequalities. GBV is one of the areas that have drawn the attention of feminists in the academic and political dynamics. Violence against women is considered as a vile result of gender imbalances in the society. Feminism seeks to enlighten the society on the injustices that occur in society and ways to change how to address them. The aim of feminists in the world is to change the international and national dynamics that support gender imbalances and inequalities in the society. These changes are affected through women empowerment.

In most Western history, public and good life was for men while women were subjected to domestic violence. Women in medieval Europe were denied the right to study, own property and even participating in public events. In France at the end of the 19th century, women were still forced to cover their heads while in some parts of Germany; men had the rights to sell their women. It is a situation where women are banned or prevented from conducting any business without a male figure to represent them may it be a brother, husband, or father (Miller, 2017). Women who are married were not allowed to control children without permission from their male partners. Moreover, women had very little or no access to basic education and could not take part in any office or professions. It is unfortunate that in some parts of the world, some of these regulations on women persist. For centuries, women have struggled against oppression and equality, and although some areas have been partially won like the rights to access education and vote, women today are still affected by forms of discrimination and violence in society (French, et al., 2018). On certain issues, there has been some improvement. For example, in 2015 Saudi Arabian women were allowed to participate in election and running for public offices. However, there has been no or very little progress like reduction in cases of women violence. Women are underpaid at work as compared to men. Some countries do not have laws against

marital rape, marrying underage girls and honor killings. Feminism concept reflects history of many struggles. Generally, feminism is a movement to help end sexist exploitation, sexism, and gender oppression. Feminism is there to help achieve gender equality in practice and law. Women rights should not be seen as special rights, they are universal rights contained in international treaties for human rights.

Understanding the influence that masculinity has on femininity from a global viewpoint is the goal of feminist views. Lorraine Radtke (2017) provides a shared platform for showcasing global developments and creative strategies for addressing them, drawing on feminist theory in the field of international relations. By giving one another more power, feminism seeks to address social injustices around the world. The majority of the time, feminists provide women the tools they need to struggle for equality in a patriarchal culture. Lorraine Radtke (2017) outlines that a culture must adapt in order to give women the confidence to defend their rights, and feminism does just that. Women who want to be in positions of power in relationships are to be empowered by feminist theory, which aims to unify people against masculinity. Nonetheless, the assessment by Lorraine Radtke (2017) confirms that there are variations among various feminist thinkers. While some contend that only people can alter societal standards, others want to come together as a movement to find answers on a unified front. Some feminist academics work to dismantle societal conventions prioritizing males over women and emphasizing equality. However, based on the description of Lorraine Radtke (2017), some feminists argue that it is important to accept and find strength in cultural gender disparities. Nonetheless, the primary objective is to enable women to discover their place in society. Often, these initiatives aim to reduce the prevalence of violence against women in society. This study examines the connection between women's financial well-being, GBV, and feminism.

2. Cultural Feminism

More crucially, to show how GBV impacts women's empowerment in society, this study will concentrate on cultural and postmodern feminist ideas. According to the description of Lorraine Radtke (2017), the goal of cultural feminism is to acknowledge the feminine qualities that women possess but which are not valued in a patriarchal culture. The goal of cultural feminism is to accept the distinctions between men and women. However, postmodern feminist theory

contends that rather than biology, culture and society are the real causes of gender inequality. Lorraine Radtke (2017) further points out that the concept criticizes collective action because postmodern feminist theory contends that women experience oppression differently. These two feminist ideas appear to be critical of radical feminism, which emphasizes equality between men and women based on biological differences rather than characteristics, culture, and societal acceptability.

Cultural feminism's main idea is to try and understand society's social position and location of women by looking more at gender differences between men and women. It is a feminist approach that focuses on liberating women through personal change, creation, and recognition of women-centered culture and masculinity and femininity's redefinition. Cultural feminism started with radical feminism in the 1970s. However, it was in 1843 that the concept of cultural feminism started taking shape when women tried to redefine and revalue themselves in the community (Okoth and Ghati, 2002). According to cultural feminism, women in society should not be treated equally as their counterparts men should be treated. For example, with this statement, cultural feminists can approve of an employer's decision not to allow women to work in the company during the childbearing period. Cultural feminism believes that people connect to other people through physical intercourse, pregnancy, and breastfeeding, unlike the legal way, which states that people are distinct, physically and separately, unconnected to each other. Cultural feminism believes in women's development outside male influence, denying women a chance in male-dominated fields.

Cultural feminist urges equality before the law and consider cultural and biological differences between women and men. For example, if the boss does not assume cultural and physical rights at the workplace, cultural feminists are more likely to disapprove of the decision made by the management. According to Assi (2009), many societal institutions follow rules and regulations based on experiences dominated by men, which is a significant disadvantage to women. Usually, it causes women who undergo biological processes such as childbirth to concentrate more on family and quit work. Unlike liberal feminism, cultural feminism provides a better explanation because it values and believes in women's development outside the male-dominant circle. Once women are allowed to follow cultural feminism, they become more creative regarding opportunities to work in an environment that men do not

control. Cultural feminism advocates more cultural and biological rights equality, which is a big advantage to women, given that they can have the same cultural and physical rights as men.

There are still significant gaps in achieving this goal, given the nation's present socioeconomic structure. It is evident that several pressures still work to prevent women from achieving success in Kenyan society. Issues such as GBV and the documented incidence of such incidents against women, for example, attest to the gap that remains in the achievement of gender equality. As a result, it is clear from the context of this idea that the nation is still far from developing the liberal society that was previously indicated. Women, for example, continue to be perceived as a lower gender than men. This suggests that the broader social system is set up to support the interests of the male population while undermining the rights of women. This has brought about a greater degree of arrogance, justifying the use of violence against women by many men. It's critical to realize that coexistence should be equitable and harmonious. Resolving these gender-based issues will be more straightforward if the nation knows this deed.

Based on the context of this hypothesis, it is evident that there has been a substantial advancement. To begin with, the proportion of women employed in the business sector has risen to an all-time high. More people worldwide are starting to appreciate the worth of women and their total economic contribution. Still, the nation's social structure bears remnants of the past, when women were still considered inferior. For example, these women still need to be treated with the same respect as their male colleagues since they are not acknowledged as authoritative individuals, even if their numbers have expanded in every area of the nation's economy. These women, especially those in leadership positions, are frequently subjected to contempt and persistent mockery, making it more difficult for them to progress. The fact that these women must put in twice as much effort as their male colleagues to advance significantly in their jobs is another concerning element. Therefore, even if radical and liberal feminists have made good strides, women continue to struggle just as much to make these advancements as they did in the past.

In light of this, problems like gender bias, discrimination, and violence against women fall under the category of obstacles to cultural feminism. This implies that overcoming these barriers is the first step in ensuring women's status in

contemporary society. People need to realize how important women are to Kenyan culture. They must thus assist these women in their efforts to advance gender equality. Still, it is critical to highlight and support the performers who help to distinguish women from males. This group should be allowed to stay true to themselves without fear of being perceived as less intelligent than others. In general, the cornerstones of restoring the worth of women in Kenyan culture ought to be expressions like 'girl power' and 'women matter.'

Even though women have generally worked to secure their place in the business sector, the odds are stacked against them. For example, some efforts, such as equal pay campaigns, continue to highlight the suffering of women. These initiatives provide evidence that, despite social perceptions of equal representation, discrimination and prejudice based on gender still affect women. Ideally, even though these women put in a lot of labor, there are not many incentives that respect what they provide. For example, a few are in senior positions in the nation's gig economies and organizations. This demonstrates how these organizations either discriminate against women or fail to acknowledge their efforts and commitment to their roles. After passing the new constitution, men/women of either gender must account for one-third of all appointive or elective positions. Despite this passing, women in Kenya are still denied government-appointed jobs. The recent debate in the Kenyan parliament has been on the two-third rule. The cabinet wants to change this amendment but has strongly been met with protests by different women's rights movements and organizations in the country. This has not gone down well with men who feel that women are overreacting in demanding their rights.

To understand the concept of cultural feminism, we have to look at African history and the role played by women in the struggle against colonial powers. Apart from fighting for reproductive rights, African women were used to provide food and information to soldiers fighting colonial powers. In Kenya, women were usually organized in work parties in different social groups. In Nigeria, for example, among the Igbo group, women were organized in other patrilineage daughter and wives' associations ruled by women's councils. As colonialism gained fame and ground, such women groups were redirected by colonial governments and missionary groups. In Kenya, women's groups and movements faced many challenges to achieve some value and equality in economic, social, and political aspects due to Kenyan society's

patriarchal nature. Some of the women who have contributed well to the feminist movement in Kenya despite challenges from male dominance include Professor Wangari Maathai, who was a political and environmental activist. It is still unfortunate that women in Kenya still struggle with problems such as poverty, domestic violence, and other social injustices. In Kenya today, feminism is still suspicious not only by men but also by women who have worked in the women's rights movement for many years.

3. Post-Modern Feminism

Compared to conservative feminist views, postmodern feminist philosophy is not the same. According to Garnier's (1990) explanation, postmodernism dissects orthodox literature and ideas about gender equality to advance gender balance. Postmodern feminists contend that political and cultural variables are the cause of gender disparities and imbalances. Postmodernists disagree with orthodox feminists in that they do not think genetics is a factor in the persistence of gender inequality in society. It aims to identify feminine characteristics in women that are not valued in patriarchal societies (Wolf, 2007). Gender disparities are not caused by genetics, according to postmodern feminist thought, but rather by culture and society. The concept criticizes group action because postmodern feminist theory contends that women experience oppression in many ways (Frug, 2014). Though it emphasizes equality based on biological distinctions between men and women rather than characteristics, culture, and societal acceptability, this philosophy of feminism appears to criticize radical feminism. Women encounter GBV in particular ways, according to the theories of postmodern feminist theory. Thus, there is not a single, effective method for addressing violence against women (Waugh, 2012). Postmodernism also promotes women to become more powerful by learning about the political and social forces that influence their lives. Postmodern feminism acknowledges the distinctions between men and women. The theories also provide strategies for addressing violence against women by acknowledging the presence of a patriarchal culture. Different interventions and action plans are employed in Nairobi County, Kenya, to reduce violence against women based on their gender.

Postmodernism promotes women's empowerment by dismantling the social and political structures that now stand in the way of gender equality. The concept addresses how society and culture see gender inequality (Gagnier 1990). Postmodern

thinkers have linked cultural factors to GBV against women. These scholars argue that the mainstream theories of International Relations do not offer a comparable categorization of GBV. They say that depending on societal and cultural standards, GBV differs from woman to woman. They argue that although certain cultures openly condemn violence against women, others do not. Gagnier (1990) pointed out that culture cannot be viewed as a global cause of GBV against women. Globally, these ideas about gender inequity provide women with varying degrees of empowerment. Violence against women is a product of social and political marginalization rather than innate inferiority in women.

Postmodern feminism offers a philosophical framework for understanding GBV. Postmodernism rejects the notion that social critiques are predicated on an overarching intellectual framework (Gagnier, 1990). Philosopher Judith Butler argues in her concept of postmodernism that GBV cannot be viewed as a universal philosophy and that social vices should be more purpose-driven and locally oriented. Postmodernist theories of International Relations are incompatible with the reality of GBV against women. Instead, it is a local problem impacted mainly by the political and social environment. Since the severity of gender inequality varies among nations, addressing GBV depends on political and societal will. The societal structures that have long been in place are the primary causes of GBV against women (Gagnier, 1990). Therefore, while empowering women, their needs should be taken into account. Fraser and Nicholson (1992) assert that postmodernism challenges the universalist framework of justice and egalitarianism. In light of localized action, for example, postmodern scholar Michel Foucault contends that this strategy casts doubt on the effectiveness of all social activists. It is possible that equality frameworks that work well in one part of the world will not work well in another. Postmodernism, therefore, holds that gender equality must be limited in line with local sociocultural norms.

The topic of GBV against women presents difficult questions that are brought up by feminist theories. Feminist scholar Donna Haraway claims that the philosophy aims to enable women to pursue social equality (Haraway, 2016). Along with promoting equality in society, feminism seeks to eradicate violence against women. Postmodern feminist methods acknowledge the biological disparities between men and women to promote positivism in those inequalities. The goal of postmodernists is

to end the social and political marginalization that breeds violence against women in our culture. They promote equality by competing against men on an even playing field. Conventional feminists are against merit-based equality; postmodern feminists are in support.

The primary rationale behind the selection of postmodernism is its potent influence on societal perspectives on equality, women's rights, and the dismantling of gender stereotypes. However, postmodernism views this as a daring move, challenging the tenets of feminist theory by asserting that gender is a social construct. Therefore, postmodern feminists emphasize that women must struggle and maintain their place in society to dismantle traditions that are oppressive to women. This idea is crucial to the research since beliefs and transitions account for the majority of violence against women in Kenya.

As a result, postmodernism emerged to refute the notion of a universal, essentialized femininity. It does this by asserting that gender is socially constructed and changes with time and space. Politics of difference and equality, which honor and acknowledge the variety of women's experiences and viewpoints, are causes that postmodernists support. As such, the task of ensuring social equality falls on postmodern feminism.

III. HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK

Many societies continue to view domestic violence as a sensitive issue. The magnitude of this problem traces its path back even before the colonial periods. Despite the efforts to address this concern, there are still numerous reports confirming the traces of domestic violence across generations. For instance, the 2002 statistical reports by the WHO showed that one in every five women and one in every seven men experienced some form of physical violence within their intimate relationships (WHO, 2017). The reported numbers confirmed a significant decline in the rates of domestic violence in comparison to years prior to the turn of the 21st century. The overall assessment made was that during this period, cases of domestic violence revolved around the projection of power. As such, most victims of this crime were mainly women suffering at the hands of their male counterparts. Based on these statistics by WHO, the rate of domestic violence dropped close to 23% (WHO, 2017). However, the numbers presented still point to the continued existence of this problem.

Considering that one out of every five women is exposed to domestic violence, this shows that over 20% of the total number of women around the globe is subject to this menace. This is reflected in millions of people around the world. Although the subsequent statistics from 2018 revealed that the number has declined to one out of every three women, the magnitude of the problem is still alarming (World Bank, 2019). The most significant concern is that despite the global diversifications across the years and the change in generations, one constant about domestic violence has stayed the same. There seems to be no particular justification for this form of violence. Interestingly, more emphasis is placed on other criminal cases like robbery and fraud, with little emphasis on the criminal nature of domestic violence. As such, while these women continue to suffer, the world and everyone in it keeps on progressing.

Based on the provided assessment, it is clear that society must acquire methods for ending this long-standing wife-beating custom. Domestic abuse that

goes unchecked maintains women's inferior social status and denies them equality before the law. Men abuse women's autonomy and sense of value by using domestic violence. Governments that fail to deter and hold accountable those who commit domestic violence treat women like second-class citizens and make it evident that society does not care about violence against them. Violence against women, both outside and at home, has always existed, even though it currently receives much more attention. Every African society is aware of the inferior status of women (UNICEF, 2000). In most African nations, women have experienced physical abuse throughout history. Domestic violence and other types of violence against women were for far too long regarded as familial and private concerns that should keep out of the public eye. However, in recent years, gender violence has become pervasive in African nations, with Kenya no exception. This section discusses the root cause of GBV in Kenya, how culture contributes, and the impact of education on women's violence.

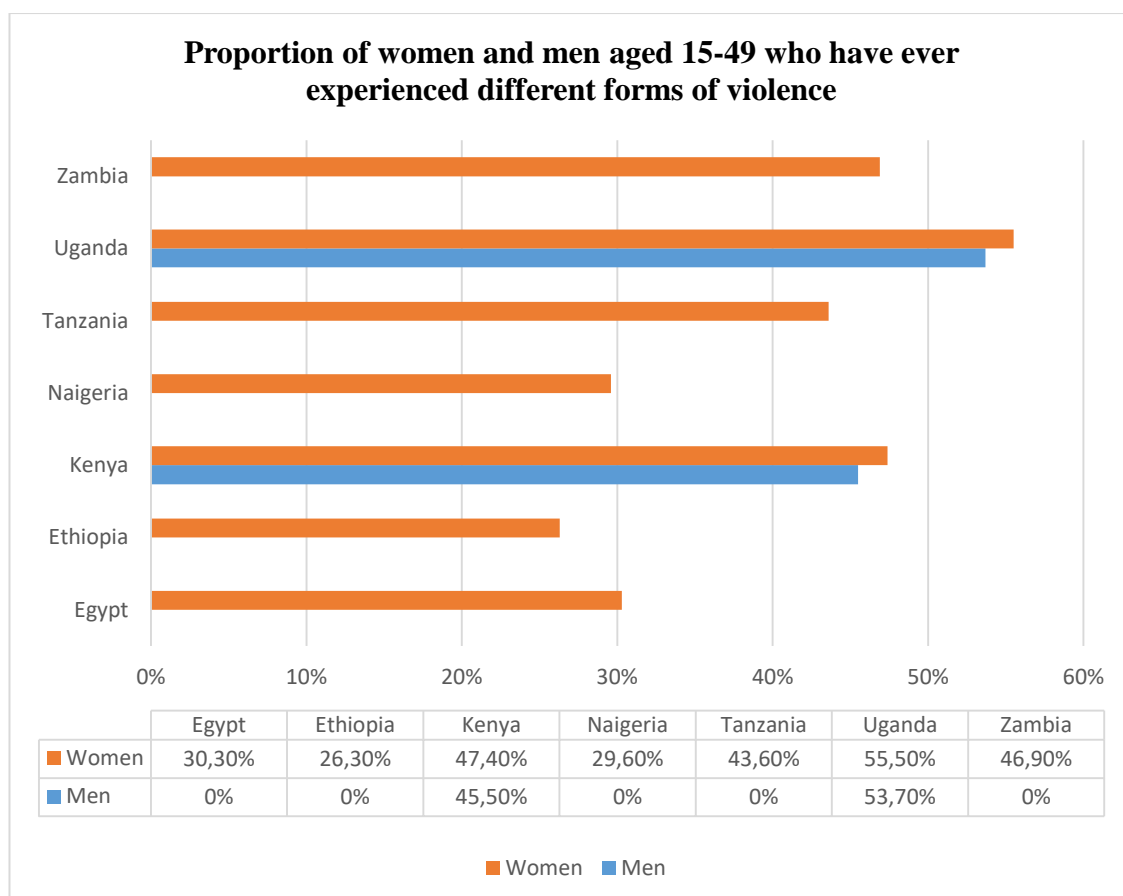


Figure 1 Proportion of women and men aged 15-49 who have ever experienced different forms of violence

Data source: Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from Egypt,

Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia between 2013 and 2016 (Nyamu and Wanjama, 2021).

Generally, from the context of the provided data, it is clear that Kenya is amongst the highest-ranking countries in Africa regarding the prevalence of GBV. Figure 1, in this case, shows Uganda as the only country surpassing Kenya. The fascinating aspect is that this problem is affecting both men and women. Even though the percentage of men subjected to such criminal acts is lower, the number still suppers the total cases of GBV in many other countries in Africa and worldwide. The statistics recorded in nations like Zambia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Egypt are more fascinating. Based on the report by Bannister and Moyi (2019), the cases of GBV directed towards men are almost negligible in these nations. Considering the country's social structure, it is clear that the most influential actor in the recorded high prevalence of GBV in Kenya is the general social stereotype that exists in the country. The recurrence of these incidents has created a society that is tolerant of such acts. According to the assessment by Bannister and Moyi (2019), very few individuals recognize the cruelty of this problem and its negative aspects. It has become a common culture for men to undermine the value of women and vice versa. The dominant factor contributing to the recurrence of GBV for both men and women in Kenya is the context of power and authority. Ideally, the current system is built on the idea that those in authority have control over their subordinates (Bannister and Moyi, 2019). As such, irrespective of whether the person in charge of the relationship is a man or a woman, the possession of power gives them the mandate and authority to dictate the lives and actions of their subordinates.

What makes a nation like Nigeria, for example, different is that this society has given men an added advantage in the social hierarchy. According to Oladimeji et al. (2011), there is a common stereotype that men are superior to women in Nigeria. The societal expectation, therefore, is that these women are expected to respect and obey the men. As such, irrespective of the wishes of the men, the women are obliged to follow such wishes and ensure their fulfillment. As highlighted by Oladimeji et al. (2011), this social stereotype has also contributed to an unstructured legal system in Nigeria.

Contrary to Kenya, where the laws on GBV are gender-neutral, Nigeria lacks an appropriate legal framework that protects men from GBV. The general social

culture in the country is that men are not expected to be subject to such acts of violence, especially from women. This has made it difficult for the men to report such cases. Based on the description of Adetutu et al. (2021), the critical factor is that there are cases of GBV directed towards men. However, their need to protect their self-esteem pushes them to remain silent when exposed to such acts. The country has, however, put in strict measures that take action against any woman who falls victim to GBV. According to Adetutu et al. (2021), this has contributed to many women having the confidence to report these incidents as opposed to men. It has become clear to women that the country is out to protect them from these kinds of predators. The contrary is true about men, with most of them feeling that no system in place fights for their interests and well-being. As such, while the statistics show no records of GBV against men, certain hidden cases of these incidents are continuously ailing to get reported. In addition, the lower number of instances of GBV recorded in Nigeria or women stems from the fact that the country is more inclined and takes it more seriously to address cases of GBV directed towards this population. Adetutu et al. (2021) point out that this is very different from the response model in Kenya, where while there are systems in place to deal with the issues, the scope of intervention or those in authority is quite limited. According to the assessment by Adetutu et al. (2021), this discourages both the men and women who are victims of such criminal acts while encouraging the perpetrators to continue their acts of terror. Therefore, the gap in the response model in Kenya also plays a crucial part in the prevalence of the problem in the country compared to Nations like Nigeria.

A. Relationship between Cultural Background and Gender-Based Violence

Reported cases against women continue to rise even after the government passed strict laws that would help reduce the violence. The interesting factor is that it appears like there is absolutely no one asking themselves the question as to the rise in these cases of domestic violence. Clearly, considering the magnitude of this problem in the country, it is evident that there has been no possible research to identify the root cause of violence against women in Kenya. The conducted survey by Bannister and Moyi (2019) in 2006 revealed that 40% of the married women in the country were subjected to domestic violence by their husbands. These surveys also showed that 39% to 47% women in the country experienced GBV in their lifetime. These

statistics confirmed the presented reports by Bannister and Moyi (2019), which showed that 81% of the cases of men subjecting their wives to domestic violence were unjustified. It was clear that most of these cases were subjects of the continued attempt by these men to express their dominance against their wives.

The similarities between these statistical reports confirm that while the years have progress, almost a decade later there are still concerns relating to the unjustified cases of domestic violence that women in the country are subjected to. These surveys in Kenya also run concurrently with the aforementioned statistical analysis by the WHO. The comparative assessment of these two reports confirms that cases of domestic violence are a recurrent global menace. The variation in the figures shows the prevalence of this problem in most developing nations like Kenya and most of East, Central and West Africa. However, the rampancy of these cases has also been a great source of concern even across Asia and South and North America. Considering the magnitude of the economic gap between these regions, it goes without saying that domestic violence has stretched beyond the context of a regional problem to a global social crisis.

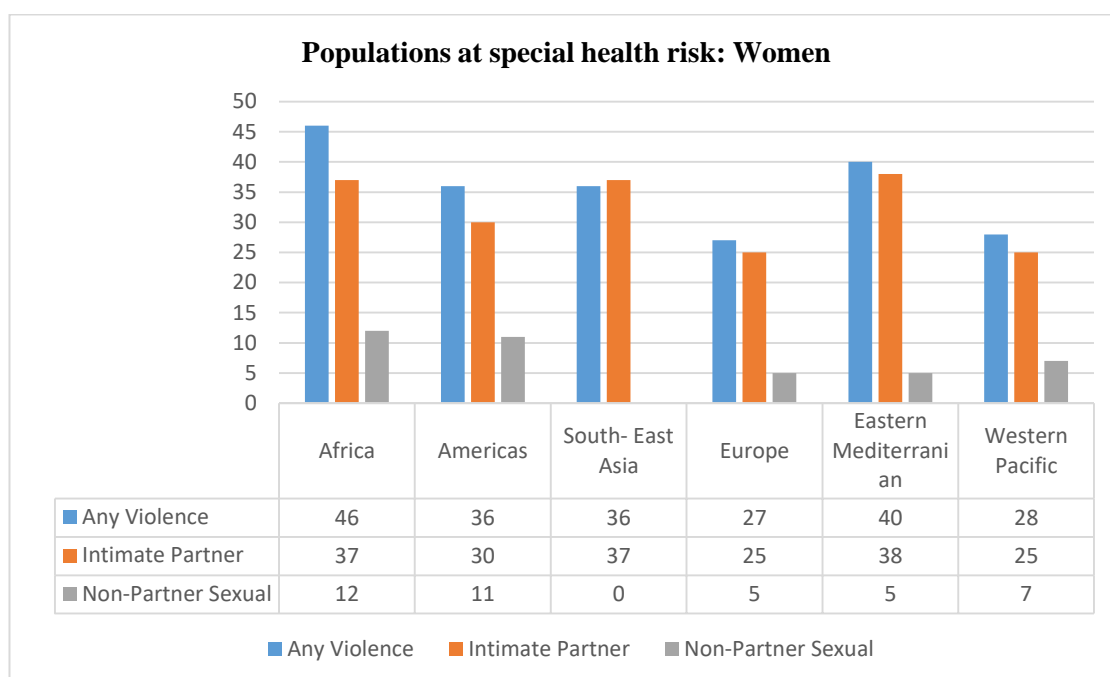


Figure 2 Populations at special health risk: Women

Data source: World Health Organization (Allsworth and Goldman, 2017).

Figure 2 confirms the pattern of violence around the world. Based on the provided data, Africa continues to register the highest cases of gender-based violence

than any other region in the world, followed by America. These 2021 reports show that approximately 45 million individuals are exposed to gender-based violence. This is closely followed by the values registered in the eastern Mediterranean region, averaging close to 40 million victims of gender-based violence. While these figures are higher across Africa, the consistent trend across the globe is that most of the cases of gender-based violence are intimate partner-related. This shows that couples in a relationship are at a greater risk of being subjects of gender-based violence than any other group. In Kenya, for example, 40% of the women in a relationship have been victims of gender-based violence. Interestingly, the percentage registered by victims of gender-based violence in a non-partner relationship only averages 6 million. This shows that the intimate partner relationship is also crucial in escalating this problem.

The variation in the prevalence of this problem across the highlighted regions also results from the social model and general culture of each part. For instance, the fact that there are higher cases of gender-based violence in Africa and the Mediterranean region is prompted by the created culture within these areas where the existing social norms give men excessive power. The Mediterranean region, for example, registers no incidents of gender-based violence targeting men. However, the recurrence of these incidences among women is quite alarming. The same model is observed in Africa. While there are cases of gender-based violence directed towards men in Africa, comparatively, women victims represent close to 80% of the reported cases of gender-based violence. The superiority of men in this region has given them dominance over the female population. The fact that no severe initiatives are put in place to address such issues makes them even more common. The higher number of intimate partner relationships confirmed this problem's general scope. Men in such relationships abuse the power presented to them by society by subjecting their authority over women. As such, provided this culture continues, it becomes difficult to holistically address this problem, especially in regions like Africa and the Mediterranean.

The exciting factor based on the presented data is that the Southeast Asian region has reported no cases of non-partner gender-based violence. This is ideal because the general social culture in the area promotes equality in gender rights. This means that there are serious legal actions against both the male and female

perpetrators of gender-based violence, thus limiting these cases entirely. Moreover, there is usually minimal interaction between both genders, especially with the existing ethical principles within this region. The culture of these communities fights against any such external relationships and emphasizes the value of marriage as the only entity of unification between a man and a woman. This limits any form of contact between both genders, which has ultimately contributed to the lower cases of non-partner gender-based violence. However, overall, across every one of these regions, and especially Africa, women in intimate partner relationships remain at risk of gender-based violence than any other group.

Generally, given the scope of the highlighted problem, the best solution to ending violence and brutality against women is first to understand the root cause and then address the issue (WHO, 2011). In Kenya, culture is the most significant cause of violence against women. Culture is defined as people's way of life and is passed from generation to generation. Culture is very diverse, varying from one region to another, and most cultures in Kenya do not favor women. Instead, men are the biggest beneficiary in society today.

A good example is the Maasai, Somali, Samburu, and Pokot cultures, where women are subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) against their wishes (Richard and Denholm, 2005). The Kenyan culture has tolerated women battering in marriage to instill discipline in the woman. Women in almost all Kenyan cultures are belittled and seen as an instrument of giving birth. The same culture sees men as the heads of the family and the woman as the 'tail,' yet the country passed laws to avert the problem. This section of the paper discusses how cultural practices reinforce women's violence in Kenya.

Culture automatically influences how people view gender violence against women and girls. Many communities use culture as an explanation for violence against women and girls. System of culture usually erects barriers to resources and services available to women in a society where gender and race bias compromises access to justice. This issue is made worse by the widespread ideologies that support female subjugation. Violence against women is traditionally justified in many philosophies (UNICEF, 2000). When spouses physically abuse their wives, there are social repercussions. The theories' discussion is predicated on a specific conception of sexual identity. Manhood must be equated with the capacity to control others,

mainly via the use of force, according to masculine construction. It is argued that masculinity offers man the ability to influence the lives of people around him, particularly women. Women are perceived as submissive and passive and expected to accept abuse as a natural part of their lives. These philosophies relate a woman's identity and self-worth to her relationship with her son, spouse, or father. The use of feminine language is forbidden for an independent woman. Other concepts connected to this include the standards of beauty, which demand that women harm themselves or their health to adhere to specific aesthetic standards.

Traditions and religion usually excuse violence against women. Certain manufactured behaviors carried out in the name of religion violate well-established standards of women's human rights. Fundamentalist activities serve as an example of this. Traditional behaviors and some elements of custom frequently cause aggression against women. These include, among other things, female infanticide, male preference, foot binding, early marriages, virginity testing, and FGM (Women's Aid, 2018). Violence against women has been perpetuated thanks to blind adherence to these customs and inaction by the authorities. Aspects of the local, national, and global media also contribute to the attitudes that lead to violence against women. For instance, the usage of pornography, which is both a symptom and a cause of violence against women, or how the media perpetuates negative preconceptions of women as being weak and powerless are just two examples.

However, the most significant cause of violence against women is government action and tolerance. The Kenyan government sits down and watches as men, in the name of culture, violate women and girls. The most significant consequence is fear inhibiting women's political and social participation. Relationships are culturally and socially constructed. Several socio-cultural factors include norms, beliefs, taboos, values and community expectations, physical and economic resources, and personal attitudes towards a specific behavior (Wach and Reeves, 2000, p.21). For example, wife inheritance is common in some communities in the lake part of Kenya. When a man dies, the deceased's brother inherits the woman against her will. Most of the women have suffered psychological torture in the process. Most rural women are discriminated against regarding access to productive and social resources, employment opportunities, family decisions, and health status. In rural areas, this discrimination has also affected women in urban

centers. Violence against women is slowly becoming more rampant in urban areas than in rural areas. Cross-cultural studies show that at the societal level, women's violence and discrimination are associated with male authority and family decision-making, masculinity definition, and rigid gender roles.

There is domestic violence in every society. Domestic abusers can be from any race, ethnicity, religion, or socioeconomic background. Same-sex and opposite-sex unions can result in domestic violence committed by and against the two genders. It can be expressed in a variety of ways, such as through physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, intimidation, restriction of resources, or threats of violence. Sexual, biological, psychological, economic, and social are some of the dimensions (Bannister and Moyi, 2019). Domestic abuse is a product of historical development. In some Meru communities, women were not supposed to possess more wealth than men. The little money earned by the woman was supposed to be in the man's custody. It was not organically created or determined by biology. 'Male dominance' has two historical expressions, 'male dominance', and 'male.'

According to data published in 2014 in Kenya, about 41% of women have reported having experienced sexual or physical violence from their partners or husbands (UNODC, 2017). From the number, about two-fifths of women said having suffered physical injuries due to the violence (Bannister and Moyi, 2019). However, there is a lack of up-to-date data on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Kenya. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2014 shows almost one in four women in urban and rural areas reported sexual or physical violence from their partner in the last twelve months (KDHS, 2014). This survey showed that due to cultural and societal norms, 42% of men and women in Kenya believed that wife beating was acceptable, however, under some conditions (Kiss et al., 2012, p.1173). Such cultural and social norms must be ended through community mobilization and education, which will help change unequal gender norms. Most victims of gender-based violence in Kenya do not report it to the authorities. In most cultures, women and girls are afraid to talk to the chief or police stations for fear of being beaten or assaulted once they go back home.

Because the oppression of women is primarily cultural, any explanation of the phenomena of violence against women must consider the state's institutions and society, people's conditioning and socialization, and the nature of social and

economic exploitation. Social and economic factors that take advantage of women's labor and the feminine body are among the historical power dynamics that are to blame for violence against women. Economically, poor women are more likely to be the victims of sexual assault, human trafficking, and prostitution. According to the Kenya Bureau of Statistics (2007), 27.5% of women in urban areas have suffered gender violence, and 54.7% have experienced physical and gender violence. These statistics continue to demonstrate that gender violence still occurs in metropolitan areas.

Additionally, depriving women of their economic advancement and power makes them more vulnerable and dependent, which is one of the leading causes of domestic violence against women. The family institution frequently plays out historical power dynamics. Whereas the family is a source of fostering and caring values, it also serves as a setting for the exploitation of labour, the violent display of male sexual power, and the socialization of women's subordination. In any case, it is in this setting that female sexual identity is frequently developed.

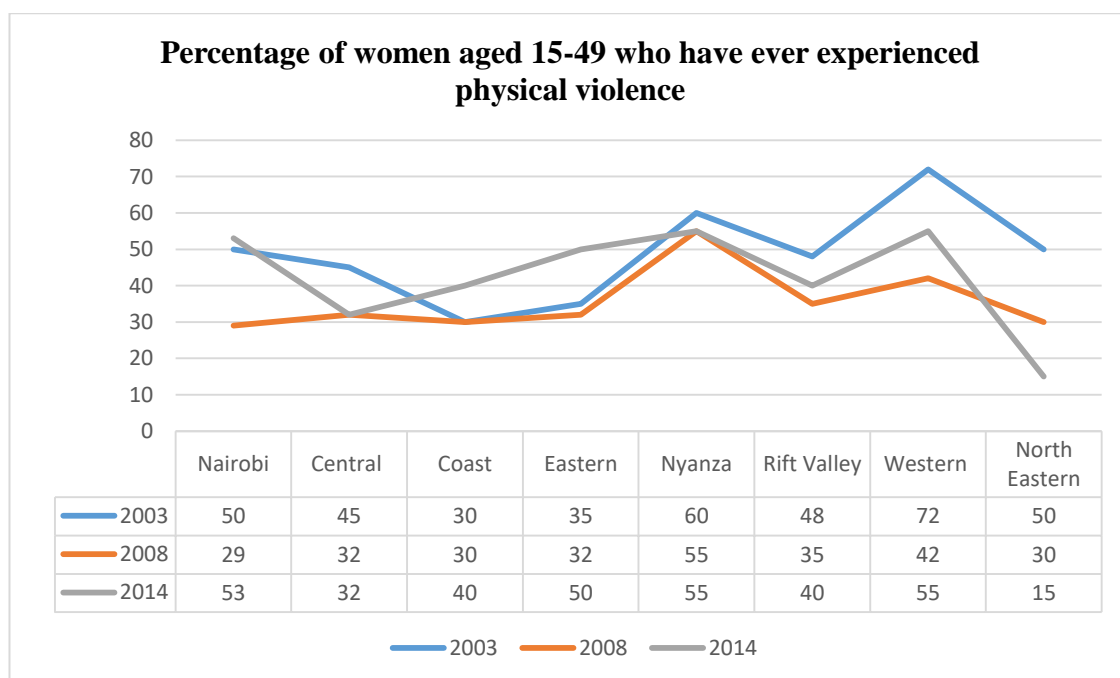


Figure 3 Percentage of women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced physical violence

Source: KNBS (Various), KDHS 2003, 2008 and 2014 (Nyamu and Wanjama, 2021).

The KNBS and KDHS statistics for 2003, 2008, and 2014, as projected by

Nyamu and Wanjama (2021), confirm the assessment above by the WHO. Clearly, the presented data shows a trend in the prevalence of GBV among women between the ages of 15 and 49. This is because this makes the period where women are more sexually active. Ideally, over 80% of the total female population in intimate partner relationships in the country falls within this age bracket. This is alarming because the most affected people are as young as 15. Considering that this represents the population most susceptible to GBV, it confirms why there are more of these cases involving women between these ages. In Nairobi, mostly in informal settlements, girls between 15-19 years are either physically or sexually assaulted. Most of them end up getting unwanted pregnancies out of rape. Being jobless and out of school, these girls depend on men for survival and thus end up in criminal activities like carrying weapons for gangsters.

Figure 3, however, projects the changes in the prevalence of GBV among this population. The data provided considers the reported cases across the different provinces in Kenya in 2003, 2008, and 2014. The recorded trend shows fluctuating values between these provinces. However, the highest number of cases of GBV is recorded in Nyanza province, western and Rift Valley. The exciting factor is that this trend also shows a gradual increase in the cases of GBV. Generally, 2014 recorded the highest number of cases compared to the other two years. As such, considering that the country has been fighting against this problem, the fact that the situation continues to increase points to an existing gap in the adopted solutions. Generally, considering the regions affected, it is clear that culture has much to do with this issue's persistence. These figures confirm the fact that in Kenya, men have become comfortable with GBV. This is because the culture in the country has given these individuals the mandate to engage in such acts without worrying about the potential implications of their actions. For instance, it is common for a man to beat up a woman, especially when they are in a relationship. The general partner of such behavior confirms that it has become more of an expectation. As such, changing this culture is the only way to address this issue. The idea is to project the implications of this problem so that both the victims and the perpetrators of such actions and the public, in general, can take part in finding solutions to the problem.

1. Legal Perspective of Violence against Women in Kenya

From the provided assessment it is evident that women are considered inferior

in patriarchal societies like Kenya. The magnitude of this problem is also a result of the influence of the laws of this land. Basically, Kenya must eradicate sexism from its Constitution, rules, and culture to further uphold the rights protected by the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Although sex-based discrimination is prohibited under the Constitution, the Kenyan government's submission to this Committee explains how it complies with the sex equality act of Article 3 in exercising the ICESCR. It embraces customary law when deciding on burial, divorce, marriage, adoption, and the succession of assets upon death or other human legal affairs. However, accepting customary laws entails activities that can occasionally be unfair due to how they are written. The Constitution's paragraphs 82(4)(b) and (c), for example, promote discriminatory practices from the context of customary policies (UN, 1966). The Law of Succession Act is a perfect example of the gap created by these laws. This statute of the Constitution prevents the division of any livestock, crops, or arable land within the territories defined by the Gazette from being controlled by traditional customs. For example, these laws prohibit women from the inheritance of property upon their husbands' death, promoting discrimination against this group.

The context of the Constitution projects women as an inferior gender, which gives men power and superiority over them (Sepúlveda and Carmona 2003). Furthermore, the Constitution acknowledges that judicial precedent continues to concern the achievement of rights for minorities, particularly children and women. Still, it does not consider laws and customs that support and uphold equal treatment and respect for women according to the provision of the ICESCR. The government downplays the detrimental effect on women's rights despite claiming that it suffices to acknowledge that the tribunals have been very assertive in proclaiming the privileges of women in terms of possession is concerned whether it's in nuptial, dynastic, or other suits.

Therefore, the report inaccurately claims that the judiciary has been 'assertive' in rendering progressive rulings, which justifies a fundamental flaw in the Kenyan Constitution. In practice, women's access to housing, property, and land is still restricted by sex-discriminatory legislation. This is especially true of courts that deal with domestic violence and disputes. For instance, 'the 2007 ruling *Echaria v. Echaria*' by Kenya's top court demolished any perception of the advancement of

women within a marital relationship (Ouma, 2023).

Furthermore, the parliament still needs to introduce, much less enact, such important legislation, despite the Kenya Law Reform Commission's admirable and arduous work to design measures that ensure women's equal rights in a marital relationship. Conflicts between defending fundamental human rights and protecting the interest and well-being of girls and women have resulted from Kenya's legal system's blend of statutory and customary law. All other rules in Kenya are subordinate to the Constitution.

Section 3(2) of the Judicature Act states that, to the extent that it is appropriate, does not violate fairness and morality, and does not conflict with any codified constitution, African precedent shall be followed in civil proceedings in which one or several of the parties are subject to it or impacted by it (Ouma, 2023). This legislation explains the role of the traditional laws within the Kenyan Constitution. Contrary to popular belief, the 'repugnancy' exclusion from the operation of common law has only sporadically been successfully used in situations affecting women's equal rights. Therefore, constitutional and statutory adherence to common law harms the ICESCR's safeguarding of women's rights and must be remedied immediately.

Although GBV is still a severe problem in Kenya, it is clear that the country is already taking strict initiatives to help tackle the problem. For instance, the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act of 2006 (SOA) has seen a significant reduction in the cases of sexual assaults in the country since its implementation (Ajema et al., 2011). Ideally, the provisions of this policy outline that a person who intentionally commits rape or an indecent act with another within the view of a family member, a child, or a person with mental disabilities is guilty of an offense and is liable upon conviction to imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years. According to Ajema et al. (2011), this means that the country is diving deep into any forms of sexual violence to protect the victims of this Act and make it clear to the perpetrators the repercussions of such actions. As such, the accompanying conditions do not matter; any individual found to engage within the context of the condition above is subject to imprisonment of no less than ten years.

The recent Protection Against Domestic Violence Act 2015 (PADV) confirms the Kenyan government's initiative to intervene on behalf of the victims of domestic

violence, which also includes GBV. Ideally, the context offers protection and relief for women victims of GBV. According to the discussion by Isaboke (2016), the Act has expanded the *loci standi* (*locus standi*) for GBV cases and outlines the process for obtaining protection orders. As such, steps are already being implemented to ensure favorable conditions motivate the victims of GBV to report such incidents. Based on the assessment by Isaboke (2016), there are also already existing support measures specifically designed to help these individuals recover and learn to cope with such an experience. Considering the success of such initiatives in countries like the United States, it is clear that the government is making progressive steps towards addressing the issue of GBV.

There is also 'the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act of 2011' that confirms Kenya's progression regarding protecting the female population from GBV. However, contrary to the policies above, this regulation is centered on criminalizing female genital mutilation. As highlighted by Ahmadu et al. (2022), those subjecting such women to these acts are liable for legal actions. Moreover, if a woman dies, the individual engaging in such an act is subject to life imprisonment. While FGM is not as common as in traditional times, the existence of this policy confirms the steps that the country is taking to protect the safety and well-being of the female population.

Finally, there is the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act 2011, which has also been an effective policy change that has helped foster the protection of women's rights, safety, and well-being. Ideally, the operationalization of this policy has ensured that any individual who knowingly misrepresents any fact for purposes of facilitating the acquisition of travel documents or fraudulently obtains any copy from Government agencies to assist in the commission of an offense of trafficking in persons commits a crime and is liable to imprisonment for a term of not less than ten years (Aziz, 2015). This law has reduced the incidents of human trafficking and related forms of violence. Overall, while there are still gaps in the country's response to GBV, the regulations above suggest the willingness and commitment of the government to address this problem.

2. Social Dimension of Culture

It is clear that women are hated by the same men who take pleasure in and own them with no regard for their rights and liberties because they are viewed as

objects that belong to the men and from which they receive their satisfaction. The result of patriarchy's inequity is domestic violence (Bannister and Moyi 2019). In Kenya, saying "women should be tolerant" shows that beating women is considered normal. Peninah Wangechi is an example of someone who pardoned and dropped charges against her spouse after he stabbed her 17 times (Nyawira, 2019). Because patriarchal structures gave males a false sense of superiority, women in today's culture are unable and not expected to reject men's advances and offers.

One of the world's highest incidences of domestic violence against women is seen in Sub-Saharan Africa. More than 47% of women in Kenya experience physical and sexual violence. This rate is greater than the global norm; at least once in their lifetime, 25% of women suffer violence from intimate partners worldwide (WHO, 2021). However, domestic violence against women is growing alarmingly in Kenya. Jackeline Mwendu became the symbol of domestic violence in 2016 after her husband amputated her hands as an act of retaliation for her inability to conceive. Beryl Ouma's husband killed her by strangling her at the beginning of 2019. Over four hours, they were passed with no response to her screams for assistance (Bannister and Moyi 2019). The two women are only a tiny sample of the countless other women whose partners have altered or ended their lives. In many Kenyan communities, a barren woman is subjected to ridicule. Women are supposed to give their husbands children, and in case it does not happen, the woman suffers violence. This is the case of Mwendu, whose husband accused her of not giving birth. In marriage, if the woman fails to give birth, the blame shifts to her. Sometimes, the problem could be the man, but this is ignored. Mwendu is now disabled and has to live with the reality that she will need assistance to carry out basic activities like washing clothes and dishes. It is one of the many cases that go unreported in Kenya of women suffering at the hands of men in the name of respecting cultural activities.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand the issue of violence against women in Kenya within a historical and cultural framework. In the past, patriarchal dominance predominated, and males were allowed to 'chastise' their women. Household women were likewise susceptible to male power, which may be upheld through brutality (Guedess, 2004). Nevertheless, third parties were strictly prohibited from using violence against women and would face the consequences if they did. The only restriction on domestic 'chastisement' was that the husband was not

permitted to inflict physical harm that would prevent the lady from carrying out her duties in the home. There were not many options for recourse for a battered woman. Occasionally, she had no choice but to send the woman back to her birthplace or report the incident to respected community members, hoping they would look into it (Guedess, 2004).

Marriage symbolized family and clan ties rather than an affair between two people, which helped support this arrangement. Therefore, having a more extensive social network was more crucial than the stability of the nuclear family. The men left their social environment and sought employment elsewhere (Karamagi et al., 2010, p.287). Individuals lost interest in what was unfolding to other community members as family and social relationships deteriorated. The widely held belief that women are inferior to males made women vulnerable to male dominance. The issue of harassment against women was confined to the private/personal sphere due to the nuclear family's separation from the larger society (KBS, 2007). The imposed British legal system also had elements that portrayed women as inferior to men in society. For instance, the guy was the head of the family and, hence, the owner of the family's assets. Additionally, the law did not acknowledge the concept of rape in marriage and greatly favored men's conjugal rights over those of women. Additionally, the newly established legal framework lacked provisions for addressing violence against women as a distinct issue inside or outside marriage (Karamagi et al., 2010).

In 1966, the Kenyan government attempted to solve some of the issues. It established a Commission on the Law of Marriage and Divorce, whose mandate included studying the position of women in society, among other things. After looking into the subject and determining that wife beating was relevant to the status issue, the Commission suggested a Bill that would have made wife-beating a crime. The majority-male Parliament rejected the Bill and defended the practice of beating one's wife as an inherent customary right of an African man and as something that belongs in the private sphere and does not call for government action (KBS, 2007). Thus, the failed attempt to make this Bill law means that women victims of domestic violence must rely on the apparent criminal law. Since then, women have been pressuring the state to address their problems, including the need to be protected from violence outside and at home.

In summary, culture has played a significant role in violence against

women in Kenya. Culture has placed men higher than women, depriving women of great opportunities to work and realize the best in themselves. Civilization will always be passed from parents to children, and the generation cycle continues. People need to stop spreading nasty and hostile culture. It can be achieved by encouraging every parent to teach and install positive cultural practices in their children. Boys need to understand from an early age that girls should be protected and not abused. Once this is done, there will be change, and everyone will notice. Alternative culture can be introduced to a society where girls can be taken through educative programs instead of dangerous cultural practices like FGM, and they grow up to be responsible wives and mothers in the community (Khan et al., 2000). It is high time Kenyans stopped being slaves to harmful cultural practices and rather be agents of the positive culture that promotes inclusivity and development for all people.

B. Relationship between Level of Income and Gender-Based Violence in Kenya

Considering many women depend on their husbands for their financial and survival needs, a lack of economic prospects typically puts them in danger of experiencing gender violence. This makes them obedient to their husbands out of fear of the consequences, which exposes them to domestic violence. Most people think that gender violence, particularly in the family, is mainly caused by unemployment or job loss. When a guy loses his job, he is left without the necessary income to properly care for his family. As a result of seeking household support from husbands who cannot support their families, many women have been assaulted, killed, or severely injured. Because women and children are treated as property in Kenyan society, they are denied access to resources that could help them escape poverty. Youngsters who live in poor homes are denied their right to an education, are denied access to healthcare, and are exploited. When the children protest against their seniors, they are beaten. Occasionally, because of poverty, girls and women are forced to have sex with family members because they are paid money to keep quiet and have nowhere to go to denounce it (Khan et al., 2000).

Along with losing focus, many poor men develop alcoholism, which is the primary cause of GBV. A general feeling of helplessness and a lack of purpose in life are two more effects of poverty that facilitate GBV offences. Poverty has also been

linked to the dependence of women and girls on men (as well as their acceptance of violence) and the exposure of many women to gender abuse (UNICEF, 2000). Even when a partner has no malicious intentions, men with low self-esteem are more prone to perceive women's activities as challenging to their masculinity. They retaliate violently because of this notion.

1. Economic Violence against Women in Kenya

Economic violence is widespread in Kenya and is one of the most frequent of several types of violence against women and girls. Due to a significant data gap, the problem is least understood, contributing to low awareness levels. Economic violence, according to the European Institute of Gender Equality, is any act or behaviour that harms a person financially (Herman et al., 2004) It comprises discriminatory customary laws on succession, property rights, usage of community land, poor access to money and credit, work, education, and agricultural resources. Economic violence against women, according to the UN Fund for Women, happens when a male abuser retains control over the household budget (UNICEF, 2000)

Women and girls worldwide are denied equal access to economic opportunities and power, despite regional variations in severity and shape. According to the WHO, economic violence affects 33% of women in Kenya (WHO, 2021). Several women are employed for unpaid tasks outside their job descriptions or paid less than males for work equal to theirs. Some women manage the family while being subjected to fraud and theft by some men in their enterprises, banned from employment by their partners, or left without support. Economic violence persists in keeping women in poverty and jeopardizes their ability to obtain a college degree, which reduces their chances of developing professionally (Kiss et al., 2012, p.1175). This is true despite several pertinent laws, regulations, and funds for financial empowerment.

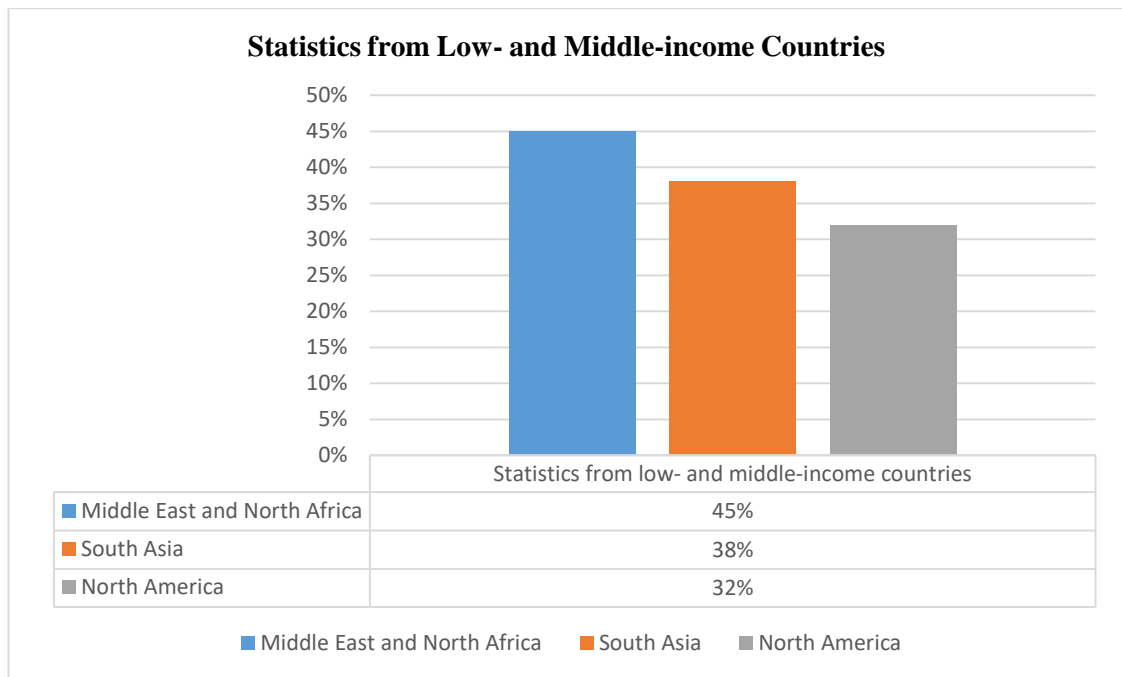


Figure 4 Violence against Women: Statistics from Low- and Middle-income Countries

Data Source: Violence against women: the statistics around the world (Pycroft, 2022).

Pycroft (2022) provides a comparative assessment between income distribution and GBV. Figure 4 shows a negative correlation between these two variables. Evidentially, high-income regions like North America have the fewest cases of GBV. However, low-income areas like the Middle East and North Africa have the highest cases of GBV. Ideally, this is attributed to the psychological implications of financial limitations. In these high-income regions, many people do not have to worry about the high standards of living or the accompanying financial limitations. As such, many couples live in a comfortable relationship. However, many couples from low-income regions experience financial wrangles. This is prompted by the high standards of living and the accompanying financial limitations. Pycroft (2022) reports that many conflicts among intimate partners arise from financial problems. The greater the problems, the higher the level of conflict. As such, women from low-income countries are at a greater risk of GBV triggered by the existing financial constraints in such regions.

Ethnic communities with males who recognize the worth of and value their women are advancing in economic, social, and sustainable development. Because when women are recognized and empowered, their ideas and creative potential are in

high demand, leading to value creation. A win over the spread of poverty is always a success regarding FGM and wife beating as human rights violations. To the delight of both women and men, women and girls are regularly empowered by the process of awareness transformation in the family and community (Bannister and Moyi 2019). As a result, they can act in a way they had never known before they are empowered with regard to their own personal interests and, as a result, regarding the household's welfare and the rest of the community. The ability and preparedness of the empowered women to participate in the 'development process' and to serve as 'managers of development' as development politics would have loved to see decades ago, are undeniable. In other words, they pick what they wish to manage and avoid becoming overburdened with responsibilities.

2. Violence in Informal Settlements in Nairobi Country

In most informal settlements in Nairobi County, violence is used as a form of survival, both socially and economically. Men will use violence to assert authority over women. Most people living in slum areas in Nairobi live within less than a dollar per day (Smaoun, 2000). In most homes, there are only two meals served per day; in this case, women and children suffer the most. Most domestic violence cases against women in Nairobi County are reported in informal settlements. Women are forced to do manual jobs like washing clothes and selling food on the roadsides. As insecurity rises, women and girls are the primary targets (Alderton et al., 2020). Every day there are reported cases of girls and women who have been raped at night and during broad daylight. Young girls are lured into sexual activities by men in exchange for little money to buy food and sanitary towels. The lack of economic opportunities in informal areas has made men unable to accomplish their goals and meet their family demands. Out of stress and frustrations, many men have turned to take cheap liquor, and in the evening, they beat up their wives. The cycle continues daily despite many cases not being reported to the authorities. Lack of employment for women makes them dependent on their husbands, and the men feel they are entitled to control their lives (Smaoun, 2000).

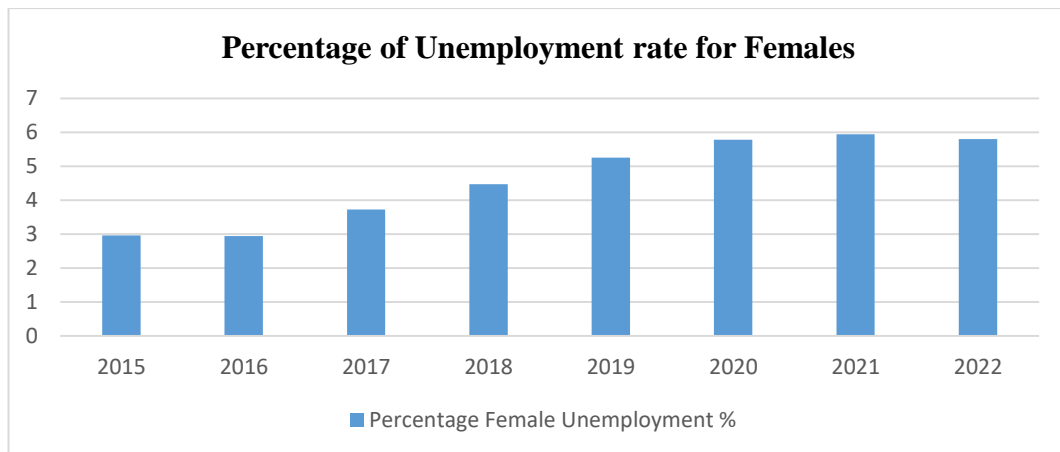


Figure 5 Percentage of Unemployment rate for Females between 2015 and 2022

Data source: The global economy

(<https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/kenya/femaleunemployment/>)

The high rate of unemployment among women has also contributed to the high cases of GBV targeting this population. Ideally, employment comes with financial security. This means that unemployed women are forced to depend on men for financial support. While this may be common in many regions, the subsequent effect in Kenya is quite concerning. According to Kulayigye (2009), many men in this country use this financial superiority as a platform for over-exerting their authority against women. As such, with the increased number of cases of unemployment among this population over the years, these women become more susceptible to GBV. Figure 5 shows a gradual increase in the cases of unemployment. Therefore, this confirms why the cases of GBV among women also continue to increase. This means that through employment, these women will be able to limit the power of men through financial independence, thus reducing these cases of GBV.

According to UNICEF, realizing women's rights requires giving men and women the same opportunities to generate and manage revenue as doing so promotes women's development, self-worth, and efficacy (UNICEF, 2000). First, create a multifaceted intervention that defends women's rights, promotes women's access to the economy, and dismantles outdated beliefs and attitudes that legitimize exploitation. Second, policies and regulations pertaining to labour and property must be maintained, and their implementation must be strengthened. Preventive measures and interventions such as financial transfers, psychosocial support for survivors, and

programs aimed at promoting economic and social empowerment should be put into place by the government. It should also strengthen advocacy and capacity building for institutions and law enforcement agencies implementing the GBV policy (Kulayigye Felix, 2009). Women and girls should know where to report abuse and how to exercise their right to be free from violence.

In summary, in order to provide women with greater economic power, it is imperative that they participate in more generating activities. Procedures must be established in order to guarantee the provision of essential economic assets through the availability of loans that are easily accessible. Accessible credit will lead to improved returns, financial independence, material assistance for the family, and increased social welfare for the society at large.

C. Relationship between Level of Education and Gender-Based Violence

The detrimental effects of inadequate education are apparent throughout a woman's life. Conflicts with the husband may arise because an illiterate girl is less capable of making her own family planning decisions. A child bride's children are more likely to experience starvation and illiteracy, and she is more likely to experience health problems and psychological suffering. An educated woman is better equipped to manage her property and finances and is more likely to have access to credit. Therefore, education is essential for developing both abilities and goals. Additionally, a woman's ability to lead and participate in decision-making is solely based on her level of education. Long-term, a woman's future ability to look for, get, and earn a living is impacted by her level of education. Economic independence is demonstrated by a woman's freedom to leave violent situations at home, particularly those involving economic abuse, and her ability to save, spend, buy property, and invest.

Table 1 Relationship between Level of Education and Gender-Based Violence against women between 2010 and 2020.

Qualification	No. of Incidents Reported by the Informers	No. Responses	Percentage
Illiterate Women	122	71	58
Literate Women (having qualification up to 8th grade)	101	61	60
Women having their Matriculation Qualification	56	42	75
Women having their Intermediate Qualification	44	28	64
Women with bachelor's degree Qualification	38	21	58
Women with Masters' Degree Qualification	26	18	69
Total	387	242	63

Data sources: Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Table 1 projects that women who lack education are more likely to live on the periphery of poverty. Long commutes to school, the gendered allocation of home labour, and the preference for boys in the family's educational investment are only a few structural obstacles and discriminatory societal practices that lead to gender education disparities (IRIN East Africa, 2008) GBV, including sexual harassment and child marriage, is one of the leading causes of females' low educational achievement. It is essential to protect girls from sexual harassment because they suffer danger both within and outside of their educational institutions, including on their walk to and from school. Despite the fact that domestic violence against women has recently been a top priority for development organizations, efforts to educate women about their human rights, the options available to them in the event of a family assault, and the coping mechanisms they can employ to overcome domestic violence have not been successful. For domestic violence to be reduced, these gaps must be filled. A general review of the literature on women's responses to domestic abuse reveals that women are unaware of their alternatives for seeking redress against domestic violence, necessitating the need to fill these gaps.

Low education level is described as both the cause and consequence of early marriages to young girls. In some Kenyan communities, marrying off young girls is seen as part of the culture (Parkes, 2015, p.16). Some of these girls are young, so dealing with their older husbands is a problem; thus, they are abused. Early child

marriage means the girl's dreams of education are over. Globally, fifteen million girls are married off at a young age every year (Parkes, 2015, p.19). Not only has young girl marriage led to school dropout cases, but it has also led to social and poor health outcomes such as domestic violence, increased risks of HIV and maternal mortality. Therefore, violence against girls and women is a plague that can be fought using education. Guaranteeing a girl's right to education means opening doors to opportunities and multiple dreams. Most women who have suffered GBV in Kenya have a low level of educational attainment. However, GBV affects women of all socioeconomic categories, including those who are rich, educated, poor, uneducated, employed, jobless and living in urban, rural, and all communities. Men who assault women come from all ages, faiths, socioeconomic classes, and marital statuses, and racial groups (Balasare, 2011). In Kenya, violence against women happens anywhere, at any hour of the day or night. Most of the time, it is unseen because it is ignored, underreported, or not recognized. Domestic violence against women is viewed as a personal and private matter in many Kenyan societies and is encouraged and tolerated by cultural norms.

Education's influence on GBV is very significant because it shows a positive impact by reducing the level of oppression. Schooling children is crucial as it helps impact their lives by increasing confidence; thus, they can protect themselves from physical and sexual abuse. Women who are educated are more likely to be employed, but they are also better able to perform social and economic tasks, which boosts their confidence. They can also better use resources and information to protect others from GBV once they are economically and socially empowered. Education is equally important to prevent domestic violence in the future (Fergus and Van't Rood, 2013). Education helps to lessen harmful effects, including stereotypes, discrimination, and inequality. Many nations worldwide that do not focus on research on women's violence have recorded numerous incidents of GBV.

It has been demonstrated that the length of time a person spends in school is positively correlated with a decline in both future perpetration and victimization of sexual and physical violence (Plan International, 2012). Women's socioeconomic standing and employment options rise as a result of education. The core cause of GBV, the unequal power relations between men and women, is reduced by women's empowerment. Nevertheless, the degree of knowledge is a very crude indicator.

Schools may become unsafe by acting as replicators of harmful societal norms and practices if it is not appropriately handled. As a result, educational institutions like schools must implement violence prevention and response plans.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The chapter analyses the various cases of GBV that are reported in Nairobi County. Such cases include sexual harassment, economic deprivation, battery, and femicide. This topic will also review various strategies women use to cope with and curb GBV. Moreover, the chapter will review the effective empowerment strategies used by women in Nairobi. In summary, the chapter will endeavor to review the findings of the study about the research question.

A. Types of Gender-Based Violence Reported in Nairobi County

The statistical analysis from the reported cases of GBV in Nairobi projects different types of such cases. Sexual violence is among the most common cases of GBV. The county, however, also records numerous cases of economic violence, with most of these reports associated with inequality in the distribution of employment and income. Unequal gender norms are also a common experience in this region. This generally points to the stereotypic culture within the country that projects men as being superior to women. This subsequently contributes to the recurrent incidences of spousal battery. These types of violence are becoming quite common among couples, with many women living in very toxic relationships. Generally, the recurrence of GBV in this region points to the need for an effective response to managing this problem. The idea is to create a culture that protects the safety and well-being of these women.

1. Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a form of domestic violence against women that has been rampant in the world. Sexual assault is defined as aggressive and forceful sexual abuse of a person. Social aggression or dominance can be categorized as marital rape, date rape, indecent assault, or incest by a domineering male (UNICEF, 2000). According to a UNICEF report, sexual assault represents 70% of GBV against women. In Nairobi County, 84% of GBV that is reported through different avenues is

sexual assault (Daily Nation, 2021). Daily Nation (2021) said that 15 rape cases are reported per day within Nairobi County, Kenya. This shows how rampant the vice of sexual assault has spread in Kenya. The statistics represent only the cases documented through the hospitals, police stations, and safe spaces within Nairobi County. However, many research studies show that most of the sexual assault incidences that occur within a marital relationship or a marriage set-up are rarely reported or documented. Many women who undergo sexual assault within a marital set-up opt to protect their partners by keeping silent; hence, they lack psychological and judicial help from the authorities.

In recent years, the Kenyan government has attempted to implement a few measures to make it easier for women to report domestic abuse and sexual violence to the police. The government has established the first police station to deal with GBV against women (Daily Nation, 2021). In addition, desks have been found in each district to deal with cases of domestic abuse, particularly with women and children. However, these reforms are insufficient, and the vast majority of cases involving violence against women go unreported or uninvestigated.

As it stands, a woman's desire to find redress is hampered by several critical issues. A woman must often report the crime at a police station without privacy. This can be daunting as women themselves can be subjected to social stigma if they commit these crimes. In addition, they may fear that the perpetrator will find out, which could lead to violent retribution or, if the abuser is a member of their family, can leave them without economic support. In some cases, police officers will see crimes within a family as a 'family issue.' They will send women back to sort things out within the home, effectively sending a woman back to her abuser. According to a UN-Habitat report, only 7% of the women they had interviewed who had experienced sexual abuse reported this abuse to the authorities. Only 6% of women who had experienced sexual abuse reported it to the police (UN, 2016). This report found that women instead prefer to rely on the informal support of family and friends. When questioned why they did not wish to report the abuse to the police, women cited shame and the sense that nothing could be done to help their situation (UN, 2016). The fear that nothing will be done is intensified by the fact that only 12% of reported rapes result in an arrest (UN, 2016).

To report violence, women have to go through a long and complicated

process. When writing an act of violence, women are required to produce three documents: a police abstract, a 'P3' form, and a medical report. The P3 form poses a particular problem for many women. Until recently, this form could only be obtained from police stations; however, it can now be found online at some hospitals. However, most people are not aware of the existence of these forms. Even though Kenyan law does not state that a payment is to be made for the P3 form, in practice, people are expected to pay for it.

Furthermore, this payment is not standardized, effectively allowing police officers to charge what they want for the form. This means that people who cannot afford to pay for the state (most people) cannot access the justice system. In addition, the P3 form does not allow for the same depth of information as the Post Rape Care Form (PRC1), which is not admissible in court. Most notably, it does not have any place to write about the victim's psychological state. While a medical professional fills in the PRC1 form, the P3 form is usually completed by police officers with little training in dealing with such sensitive issues. In the case of rape, women face obstacles to being able to access a medical report. In each district, there is only one government doctor who is mandated to deal with incidences of sexual abuse. This doctor must examine the patient and attend the court case. This means that many women will have to wait long periods before they can see a doctor; this compromises vital evidence as women may wash or throw away the clothes they were wearing at the time of the incident. The fact that this same doctor must attend the trial means it takes a long time for each case to be brought to court. This wait may further deter a woman from reporting incidents of sexual violence. Women who live in slums have further difficulties in accessing redress (Nation Crime Research Centre (2021)).

In most cases, there is little or no police presence in Kenyan slums. In Kibera, Kenya's largest slum, there are only irregular police patrols, and there is no permanent police station at all. According to a 2010 Amnesty International report, even when there are police patrols, the police do not hold the trust of the community. Often, the police only visit certain areas to extort money from community members. The situation in Kibera is echoed in other slum and poor-income areas.

Recently, the government has sought to improve the reporting of sexual assault cases. Women have become more empowered to seek help, especially from safe spaces such as churches, NGOs, county gender offices, and hospitals. The

initiative to increase safe spaces has increased the reporting of sexual assault cases. In 2020, the Nairobi police boss reported that over 129 issues of rape had been reported between January and June (FIDA, 2022). This has increased exponentially as the days pass. It is written by the FIDA report (2022) that 70 cases of sexual assault were reported in Nairobi country during the period of elections in 2022. The reported instances reflect issues that have been incorporated through official channels. Cases of marital rape and sexual offenses within an intimate relationship have not been adequately captured due to the nature secrecy of partners. Many people fear reporting such cases due to a lack of information or protection of their partners.

2. Economic Violence

Besides the commonest among the many forms of violence against women and girls, economic violence is prevalent in the third world. The issue is least understood due to a huge data gap, contributing to low levels of awareness. The European Institute of Gender Equality defines economic violence as any act or behavior which causes economic harm to an individual (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). It includes inadequate access to funds and credit; employment, education, and agricultural resources; exclusion from financial decision-making; and discriminatory traditional laws on succession, property rights, and use of communal land (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). According to the UN Fund for Women, economic violence towards women occurs when a male abuser maintains control of the family finances.

Even though the gravity and form of economic violence vary across regions, women and girls are deprived of equal access to economic resources, opportunities, and power across the world. UNFPA found that women are 18% poorer than men. In Kenya, the WHO estimates that 33% of women suffer from economic violence (WHO, 2017).

Many women are underpaid for doing work equal to men or used for unpaid work beyond their job description. Some suffer fraud and theft from some men in running their businesses, barred from working by their partners or abandoned without maintenance, yet they shoulder the family responsibility. Economic violence continues to push women into poverty and compromise their educational attainment,

resulting in diminished developmental opportunities for women. This is despite several relevant laws and policies and financial empowerment funds. Besides, Kenya is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

3. Unequal Gender Norms

Equal opportunities for women and men to generate and manage income are key to realizing women's rights, and it agrees with UNICEF that it enhances their development, self-esteem, and influence. First, devise a multi-strategy intervention that promotes equity between women and men, provides economic opportunities for women, advocates for women's rights, changing retrogressive beliefs and attitudes that culture exploitation. Secondly, laws and policies related to labor and property must be enforced and their implementation improved.

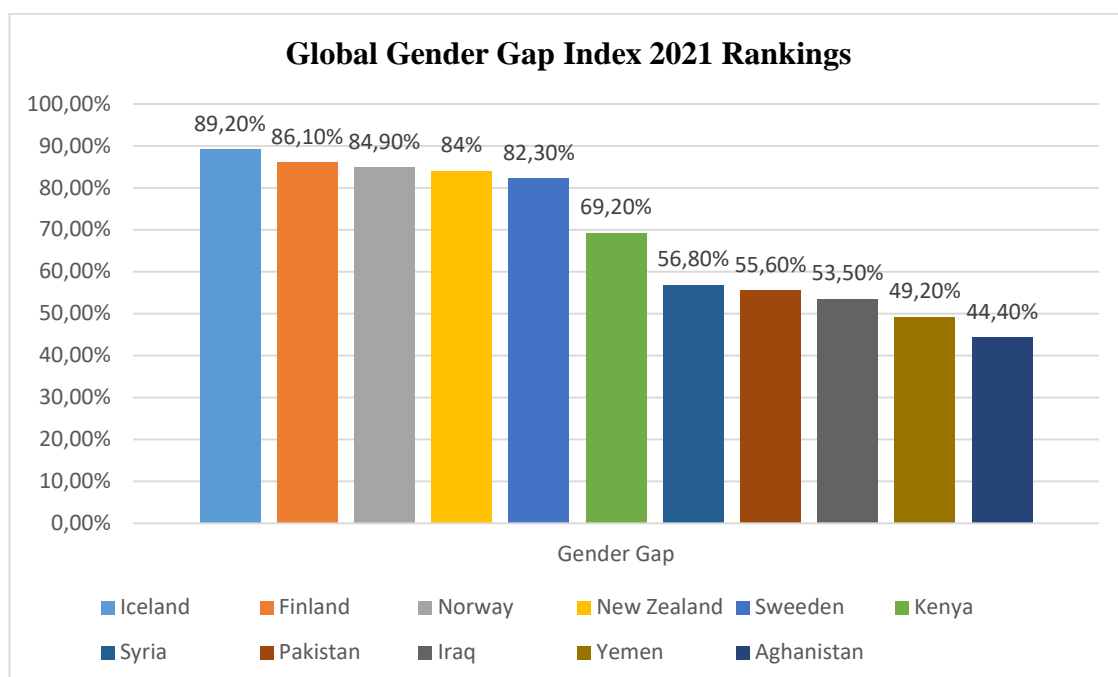


Figure 6 Global Gender Gap Index 2021 Rankings

Data **Source:** World Economic forum

(<https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021/in-full?>)

There is a need for a self-sufficient intervention action if this gender gap is to be addressed effectively. For example, the government should put preventative measures and interventions into place, including financial transfers, psychosocial assistance for survivors, and programs that promote economic and social

empowerment. Additionally, it should improve advocacy and capacity building for institutions and law enforcement organizations that carry out the GBV policy. Girls and women should be aware of their legal obligation to live free from violence, as well as where and how to report abuse. The reports by the World Economic Forum, for example, already show the severity of gender inequality in the country. Figure 6 shows that Kenya is already ranking high along with some of the most commonly known nations where gender imbalance is problematic.

The presented statistics, for example, confirm that the country has already entered the 60th percentile and is quickly escalating at an alarming rate. This means that while the male population continues to advance, the women in the country are subsequently left behind. This results from the unfavorable social conditions faced by these women in the country. Problems like gender discrimination and accompanying prejudice are proving to be a significant barrier to the progression of these women. Despite their attempt to climb the hierarchy ladder in the corporate world, the general culture of Kenyan society constantly brings them down. Generally, incidences like GBV should no longer be a problem in the 21st century. The progression of this country is thwarted by the fact that it cannot recognize the value of women. As such, the men have also become ignorant of this fact, creating a society that constantly looks down on these women. This means that the most reliable way of addressing this issue requires a change in public perception about the value of these women. It is about time that people understand that every excellent economy is built through the participation of every member.

4. Spousal Battery

Battery refers to physical harm to a person. The spousal battery is categorized as one of the main GBV reported in the world. The act is conducted by males who feel they are stronger than women. The notion has led to the assault of many women in the world. The spousal battery has been a menace in most societies globally. The act is rampant in developing communities where women's empowerment has not taken root. Most battered women are victimized by society, which makes it difficult for the vice to be curbed. UN Women report (2021) shows married batteries increased exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in the number of battery cases was due to the increased time spent in lockdown with spouses. The effect of COVID-19 on the social and economic dynamics of families increased the

chances of GBV against women by close to 21% (FIDA, 2021). Therefore, it means that Covid-19 played a role in increasing GBV cases. These FIDA reports show that most said spousal battery cases were in urban centers. In Kenya, Nairobi County reported the highest number of spousal batteries during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 43% of the total cases reported (Nation Crime Research Centre, 2021). Nairobi is an urban center where economic well-being is higher than that in rural areas. The constraints experienced in urban areas mainly contribute to the high number of cases reported in Nairobi. However, since there are high empowerment avenues for women living in the cities, most cases are reported, unlike in rural areas where the spousal battery is seen as a regular thing in marriages. Unlike those living in rural areas, women in the cities are more empowered to seek help.

According to the National Crime Research Center (2021), spousal battery is the most reported GBV against women in Kenya. The spousal battery represents 70% of the cases reported in Kenya. In Nairobi, most cases result from intimate relations, including marriage. A report released by the National Crime Research Center shows that separated couples and divorced women report most spousal battery cases. Divorced women are vulnerable groups to experience spousal battery. As supported by various research studies and criminal cases, the battering of women by men has become rampant. Mostly, the spousal battery is due to the cultural background and traditional norms practiced in the African culture.

According to Stockl et al. (2014), GBV causes a high number of mortalities among women across the globe. About 30% of women across the world are trapped in a GBV relationship. They are said to experience continuous beating, rape, and other types of assault while in a relationship. Research conducted by Curtis and Burns (2016) found that the economic status of women is tied directly to the forms of GBV experienced. Consequently, the punishments for men who physically abuse women are very lenient. This victimizes the women who undergo GBV. Several cases illustrate the judicial proceedings of GBV in Kenya. An example of such a case is 'Wilma Achieng, Case number 177736/98' (Matagaro, 2013). In this case, a man by the name of Dan Mawambwa was charged in a court of law for torturing his wife and burning her private parts. Dan claimed the wife came home late and could not account for her whereabouts. He claimed that he was allowed by his culture to batter his wife. The court fined him and released him. He was later rearrested for beating

his sick wife the same day he was released. This case shows how the judicial system failed to protect the wife against his man due to cultural practices. Such cases show how the judicial system in Kenya has been unable to install effective policies and punishments for the perpetrators of spousal battery in the country. The menace has been said to be on the rise, and the National Crime Research Center (2021) has recorded that daily, more than 50 cases of spousal battery are reported.

A notable factor that leads to high cases of spousal battery in Nairobi, Kenya, is the lack of reporting by victims of the same. Society has normalized the vice, a problem that most wives have come to tolerate. This problem of lack of reporting spousal battery imposes impediments on the judiciary and law enforcement agencies to help victims of the storm in a marriage setup. The continuous abuse of women by their partners occurs without consideration of age, race, demography, or economic class. The spousal battery has become a menace that lowers women's self-esteem and limits their development power. The victimization of women has affected their empowerment progress, hence tearing them and degrading them into powerless beings. In Nairobi, most women in the informal settlement areas are prone to spousal battery. Most of the NGOs that run campaigns against GBV against women are primarily located in informal settlements such as Mathare, Kibera, and Kawangware. These areas report 80% of spousal battery cases in Nairobi County, Kenya (Nation Crime Research Centre, 2021). A population-based study shows that around 71% of women have ever been physically assaulted by their partners (FIDA, 2022). Among the women who have been physically assaulted, they blamed themselves for the act. They feel responsible and desert to be beaten by their partners. The notion of taking responsibility for assault has resulted in the hiding of such actions by female partners. They feel that they deserve the assault and, hence, do not report the abuse. This encourages the partners to become more aggressive against women since their actions have no consequences.

5. Femicide

Femicide is defined as the killing of women based on their gender. The act is committed as a way of subjugation of women in society. In this research, femicide is defined as killing intimate female partners by men. According to Stock (2013), femicide is one of the significant causes of death for women in the world. Femicide cases occur within intimate relationships. Most violent relationships result in

homicide. Violent male partners are likely to kill their partners either intentionally or unintentionally. According to the UNDOC report (2013), Kenya is ranked among the countries with a high number of femicide cases. However, it is difficult to track down these femicide cases because Kenya does not record homicides based on gender. The statistical data used results from reported cases of GBV against women. According to Johnson and Dawson (2011), women in intimate relations have higher risks of being killed by their partners.

NGOs in Kenya document most femicide cases because the government does not legally recognize femicide. Murder cases are reported as homicide and do not indicate femicide. However, NGOs have taken the initiative to record femicide that occurs in the country. Most of the femicide cases are reported in urban areas such as Nairobi City. GBV is prevalent in Nairobi City, hence increasing the chances of femicide cases. Most women's murders are done in marriage and intimate relationships. Boyfriends and husbands who are considered violent result in killing their partners in the long run. According to Kenyatta National Hospital (2017), most of the women who were murdered showed signs of GBV against them. Such indications include evidence of sexual assault, physical assault, or head traumas. These are signs of GBV against women who have reportedly been murdered. Despite having such symptoms and evidence, their deaths are ruled out as homicide or murder. The main perpetrators of femicide in the country have gone free or received minimal punishment for their actions.

FIDA has continuously pressured the government of Kenya to recognize femicide without any success legally. Several cases have prompted FIDA to seek femicide recognition as a national disaster to address GBV against women that leads to death. Some of the topics include the killing of Olympian Agnes Tirop, which prompted country-wide outrage by feminist activists (Obiria, 18 October 2021). According to the Daily Nation Newspaper article by Moraa Obiria, the main suspect in the murder of Agnes Tirop was her husband. The case prompted FIDA to compel the then-Kenyan President to recognize femicide as a national disaster. According to the Daily Nation article, the FIDA-Kenya chairperson said, "The numbers are worrying, and FIDA-Kenya is concerned over the safety and security of women and girls of this nation and appeals to the government to uphold its constitutional mandate in protecting girls and women from these wanton killings"(Obiria, 18

October 2021). Tirop's killing is one of the many femicide cases that have been buried due to the long process of justice in Kenya. Other cases have been reported through the country's newspapers but have ended in the courtrooms as a homicide. There is no legal framework that recognizes femicide as a crime on its own in Kenya. The 2020 statistics show that around 14 deaths of women were caused by intimate partners in Nairobi County (FIDA, 2021).

Research shows that the killing of women and girls in intimate relationships is rarely a random event. The signs and indications of death in a close relationship are there, but people choose to ignore them. Most femicides result from a long history of physical abuse and violence by their partners. Most of the reported cases of femicide worldwide result from a series of GBV that has occurred for a long time. It is rare for a female homicide to result from accidents. GBV against women has been recorded as the most significant contributor to women's homicide globally. Most women who ignore GBV in relationships end up dead or handicapped. The death of women in abusive relationships results from excessive physical violence and suicides due to psychological torture. According to FIDA (2018), many cases of femicide that have been reported in Nairobi were a result of GBV. Most of the women who say physical violence from their partners end up dead from trauma and physical injuries. Femicide mostly takes 15% of GBV against women in Nairobi, Kenya (FIDA-Kenya, 2021)

Percentage of Gender-based Violence Cases in Nairobi County

Table 2 Percentage of Gender-based Violence Cases in Nairobi County

Cases of GBV	Percentage of GBV cases in Nairobi
Spousal Battery	55
Sexual Assault	25
Economic Violence	10
Femicide	15
Others	5

Data source: The copyright of the data on the above table belongs to the FIDA-Kenya report of Gender-based violence cases in 2021

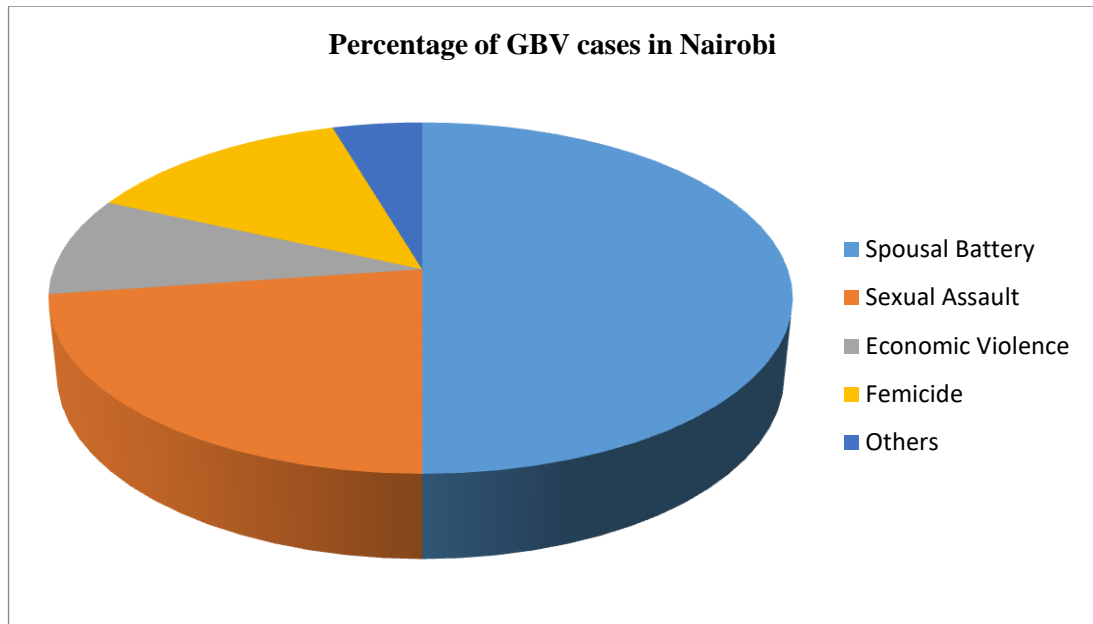


Figure 7 Percentage of GBV cases in Nairobi

Data Source: Gender Based Violence Recovery Center.

A statistical depiction of GBV cases in Nairobi is shown in Figure 7. Evidently, sexual violence is among the most prevalent instances of GBV in this area, according to the data gathered. Nonetheless, the county also reports a high number of instances of economic violence, the majority of which are linked to disparities in the distribution of income and employment. This region is likewise prone to experiencing unequal gender norms. This typically highlights the nation's stereotyped culture, which portrays males as superior to women. This in turn leads to the frequent occurrences of domestic abuse. Couples are increasingly committing these kinds of violence against one another, and many women are trapped in extremely toxic situations. In general, the persistence of GBV in this area indicates that handling this issue requires a strong response.

6. Ignoring Women using Violence

According to Richardson (2005, p.238), people are slow to acknowledge or recognize that there are some women who use violence or are physically aggressive to each other. Despite there being some evidence that women use violence against men in their relationship, most subject of discussion in this matter tends to focus on men's violence against women. Therefore, despite some of the challenges raised by women on interpersonal violence, postmodernism needs to investigate, acknowledge, and try to understand why women use violence against their partners in a relationship

(Frieze, 2005). Although women are not viewed as people to cause violence or aggression, gender issue remains part of the whole context where violence is experienced, perpetrated, and observed. Women have come out to have their voices be heard more than any other group in society. Kenyan experience shows that African women, irrespective of their ethnic background or class have a lot to do to change their class. On the extreme side, postmodernism would be at cross paths with the approach women in Kenya are using in their search for collective and individual empowerment. However, women can work hard to achieve their social class in society without using violence.

B. Theoretical Analysis of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in Nairobi County, Kenya

Generally, based on the context of the provided assessment, the global social structure still has certain gaps with regards to gender equality. The prevalence of discrimination and gender prejudice confirms the state of stagnation of the female population. These individuals are finding it rather difficult to make any progression politically, socially, and economically. While the world in general struggles to create gender balance, the societal stereotype and the created culture of male superiority seems to be a significant undermining factor to the progress of women. As such, analytic review confirms that the current response actions are not projecting the expected level of success in fighting for gender equality. However, the context of the postmodern theory projects a different model that can be used to examine the scope of this problem and the bridges towards addressing this gender stereotype culture. Postmodern feminism stresses on the value of equality and the essence of talking this stereotypic culture. The theory acts as the perfect advocate for pushing for the protection and preservation of the rights of women across every social, economic, and political platform.

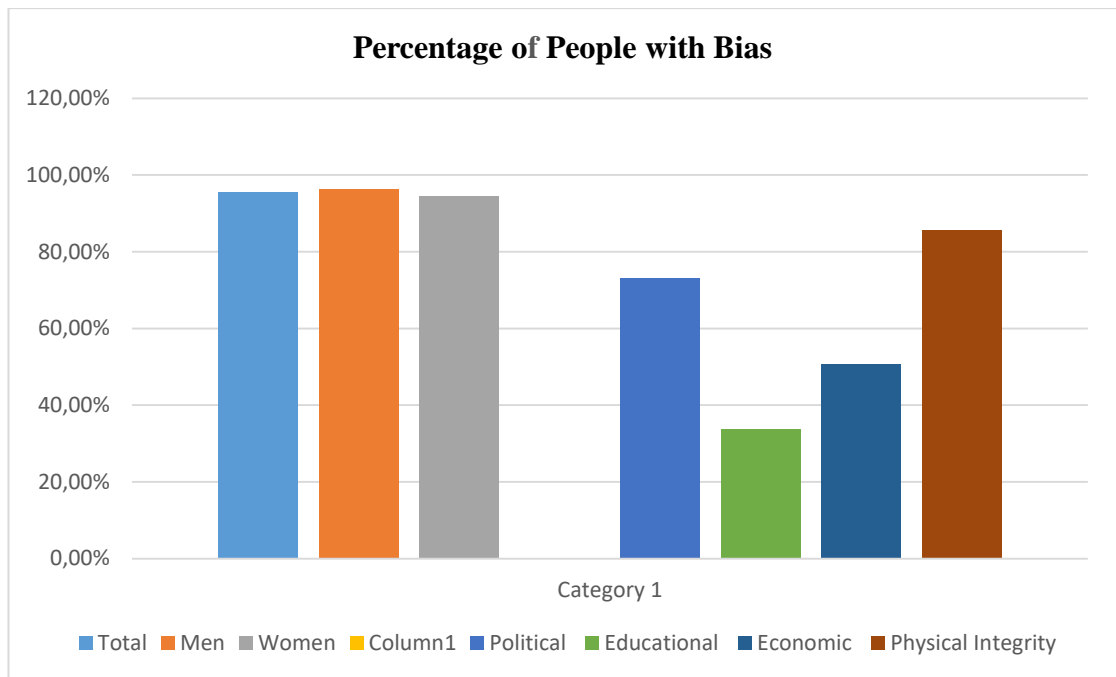


Figure 8 Percentage of People with Bias

Data Source: Percentage of People with Bias by Gender and Dimension in Kenya (<https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-gender-social-norms-index-gsni#/indicies/GSNI>)

For instance, when taking into account the aforementioned instances of GBV, the fact that so many women continue to be the target of such unjustifiable cruelty raises major concerns about the effectiveness of the widespread intervention measures. According to the data, there are not many people working to maintain this population's safety and wellbeing. However, the percentage of bias both by gender and dimension in Kenya shows how far the country still is in promoting equality. Women are still victims of various forms of discrimination and prejudice across every economic platform. This coupled with the prevalent cases of GBV against this group makes them a minority community in this country. The greatest form of bias, for example, is observed from the general physical integrity. This means that women are generally perceived as a more inferior gender which limits the level of respect that the male population has for them. These trigger subsequent biases like those observed from the economic, political and educational sector.

For instance, the women have had to work extra to make their marks in these sectors of the economy. The current political structure confirms the magnitude of the existing gap prompted by this gender bias. While there is a significant increase in the

percentage of representation of women in the economic, education and political front, these individuals still constitute less than a third of the total population in almost every one of these sectors. As a result, using this data as the foundation for a case for a comprehensive strategy to combat gender discrimination is necessary. The goal needs to be to stop any actions that may jeopardize the rights of this female population. The lack of information highlighting the severity of this issue is a persistent source of worry. As a result, many individuals, including several governments and administrations, do not pay this issue the appropriate amount of attention, especially in light of the circumstances that these ladies must deal with. Another major obstacle is the fact that gender discrimination has been a persistent issue, especially now that it appears to be becoming a universal societal norm.

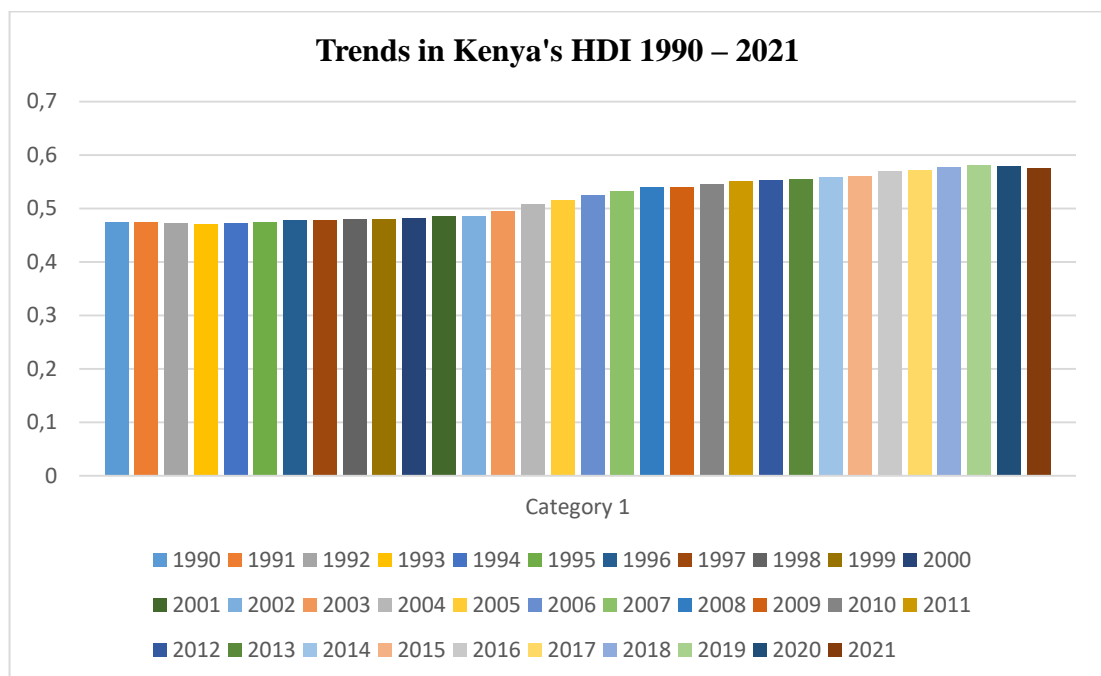


Figure 9 Trends in Kenya's HDI 1990 – 2021

Data Source: United Nations Development Programme (<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/KEN>)

With respect to the conducted research, it goes without saying that there is need to address this gender biases and this stereotypic culture. According to the claims made by postmodern feminist theory, GBV is experienced differently by women than by males. There is therefore no all-encompassing approach to combating violence against women (Waugh, 2012). Additionally, postmodernism promotes women's empowerment by educating them on the myriad political and

social forces that influence their daily existence. Theories that are postmodern feminism and cultural feminism acknowledge the distinctions between men and women. The two theories also provide strategies for addressing GBV by acknowledging the reality of a patriarchal culture. These strategies are implemented in Nairobi County, Kenya, through a variety of interventions and action plans.

The presented human development index for example shows a gradual progression of women in the country's economy. Figure 9 shows that under the right social conditions, women will be able to advance themselves and secure their place as in the country's economy. However, the existing social bias still presents a great barrier to the attainment of this objective. Factors like GBV, for example, are proving to be a significant roadblock to women's pursuit of gender equality. It is clear that the country's social structure has thwarted the willingness and power of women to fight for their place in this economy. On the one hand, there is the existing presumption that the female population is an inferior gender and, therefore cannot present the same productivity as men. This has pushed many companies and institutions to resort to hiring more male employees than women. Those women who manage to climb higher in the hierarchy have to put in extra effort and work harder than their male counterparts to do so. As such, women find themselves taking longer to reach the top level of the corporate ladder.

The same level of prejudice is projected even in the political field. The act that men have dominated this sector for close to a century confirms the state of imbalance that still exists in this country. What is alarming is that most of these male political figures have already proven to be unreliable in fulfilling their political objectives. It, therefore, begs the question as to why they continue to be re-elected every subsequent election period. Based on this assessment alone, it is safe to say that the stereotypic culture in this country that views women as inferior is the greatest setback affecting their progression. As such, addressing this problem starts with changing the mental perception of the general population by projecting the value of women in the economic, social, and political structure of this country.

V. CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the entire study and the conclusions that can be drawn from the research findings. The conclusion restates the research questions and shows how the study has answered them from the findings. The study was conducted to understand the impact of GBV and femicide on the socioeconomic well-being of women in Nairobi County, Kenya. This chapter focuses on the findings and conclusions drawn regarding the objective and research question of this study. The chapter also restates the cultural and postmodern feminism concerning GBV. At the same time, this chapter offers various recommendations on how to deal with GBV against women as well as how socioeconomic empowerment can be used to fight against violence against women.

1. Demographic Information

The main aim of this research was to study the impact of GBV on the socioeconomic well-being of women in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research was guided by three main research questions and one argumentative objective. These questions include the forms of GBV experienced by women in Nairobi County, the coping strategies used by women who undergo GBV, and the mitigating strategies employed by society to empower women undergoing GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya.

The research paper focused on women in intimate relationships within Nairobi County. The research was not specific on the age of women who undergo GBV in Nairobi County. Since the information came from secondary sources and research papers, the focus was on women in general who are above the age of 18 years. The research considered the experiences of women in intimate relationships, marriage, separation, and divorce. The research focuses mostly on the experiences of women who live in a city set up with diverse cultural backgrounds within Kenya.

2. Forms of Domestic violence in Nairobi County, Kenya

The first research question in this study sought to understand the forms of GBV that women experience in Nairobi County, Kenya. It finds the forms of GBV experienced by women are those that were documented in various research papers, police reports, and surveys from NGOs. According to Table 1 in the findings sections, four primary forms of GBV are experienced by women in Nairobi County. These forms of violence include sexual assault, spousal battery, economic violence, and femicide, among other forms of violence. Therefore, the researcher concludes that women in Nairobi County, Kenya, experience different forms of violence. GBV has different effects on the women who experience it.

Women of poor economic status are likely to undergo higher levels of GBV than those at a higher financial rate. Women across all socioeconomic groups experience GBV; however, their quality determines the levels of violence they experience. The economic situation is tied to GBV in three key ways. First, a woman with a poor financial status is likely to experience GBV, unlike a woman living in a rich economic situation, mainly because of the structural setup (such as a neighborhood) and person (such as the man's instability). These factors are primarily due to the economic status of the woman. Secondly, women who are economically dependent on violent perpetrators are unlikely to live in abusive relationships. Women who depend on their abusers economically are prone to higher degrees of GBV. They tend to protect abusers since they directly depend on them. Unlike economically dependent women, they are likely to leave an abusive relationship and seek help. The degree of violence is directly proportional to the economic dependence of victims. Thirdly, economic violence is a form of GBV against women. Economic dependency can be used to abuse women by limiting their financial independence. An abuser is likely to restrict a woman from accessing funds and attaining economic autonomy. The abusers use the economic imbalance between themselves and the woman as a powerful tool against their victims (Weaver et al., 2009).

According to a report by the World Bank (2019), different mechanisms can be used to identify gender-based violent behavior. Such mechanisms differ depending on whether one is a victim, an abuser, or a third party. However, the common forms of GBV that are detectable include physical violence, psychological

violence, and economic violence. Physical violence is characterized by beating, kicking, slapping, sexual assault, and physical pain infliction. Insults, control, slander, and public humiliation depict psychological violence. Economic violence is characterized by the controlling of funds, non-involvement in financial decisions, and gender inequality in acquiring jobs. Victims find it difficult to describe such acts as GBV. Therefore, it might be a third party to detect such acts of violence against women and help victims in accepting the same, too. The research found that women living in Nairobi County find it difficult to report such cases of violence against them. It takes intervention from friends and social organizations to rescue victims of GBV.

3. Coping Strategies used by Women who Experience Gender-Based Violence in Nairobi, Kenya

Women who experience GBV use different strategies to cope with their day-to-day life. The findings of the research identified various ways in which women manage the violence they experience. One of the common coping strategies used is isolation and withdrawal. Most women who experience GBV tend to ignore the problem and withdraw from social interactions. It is a way to retreat into their thoughts and find the solution to the problem on their own. The research found that the highest percentage of women who face GBV opt to keep to themselves and hope for a better tomorrow. They are optimistic that the perpetrators will change their behavior.

Moreover, they fear judgment from society as well as feel ashamed to be victims of GBV. Therefore, they resolve to be silent and ignore the problems they face. Another coping strategy employed by women who face GBV is seeking refuge in religious institutions. Most victims of GBV seek help from religious institutions such as mosques and churches. The institutions offer safe spaces for the victims to open up and seek help. In Nairobi County, a victim of GBV can seek help from any religious institution. Others tend to be involved in religious services and work to engage their mind and forget the violence they face. Most of the victims of GBV seek spiritual and social guidance. Different experienced GBVs in Nairobi County, Kenya, employ all these strategies.

According to Ferguson and Malouff (2016, p.1185), various programs and

strategies effectively fight GBV. Effective strategies should possess primary and secondary approaches. One of the primary approaches is to prevent violence from taking place through education approaches. This ensures the perpetrators can restrain themselves from abusing their partners. They are trained on how to cope with anger issues and stressful situations. The other strategy is the secondary approach, which is implemented after the violence. The secondary system is aimed at preventing the GBV from repeating. The victim and perpetrator work out their issues through conversation or counseling by a professional. In Kenya, the 2010 Constitution contains the 'Domestic Violence Act,' which gives precaution and prevention of GBV guidelines. These approaches offer secondary approaches to coping with GBV in Kenya. The Kenyan constitution also set up gender violence desks at all police stations to provide help to the victims of GBV. Most of the women opt to use secondary approaches to dealing with GBV. However, the secondary systems do not necessarily guarantee safety for the women. The findings of the study showed that women who opt to stay in an abusive relationship enable the behavior of the perpetrators of domestic violence.

According to FIDA-Kenya (2014), the best coping strategy for GBV victims is to leave an abusive relationship. Leaving an abusive relationship is said to be a difficult decision but a necessary one. To protect the family, women are encouraged to leave abusive relationships and not to expect change from the perpetrators. Based on the research findings, several groups offer help to victims of GBV. Organizations such as FIDA-Kenya, Haki Africa, and the Gender Recover Centre program offer help and sanctuary to victims of GBV within Nairobi County, Kenya. These organizations offer legal services as well as counseling to victims of GBV. Leaving and seeking help is one of the best strategies to be used by women in dealing with GBV.

4. Effects of Gender-Based Violence on the Socioeconomic Well-Being of Women in Nairobi, Kenya

Based on the findings by Lopez-Avila (2016) there is a direct relation between the possible GBV and women involvement in socioeconomic empowerment initiatives. According to the American Psychological Association (2017), different dimensions of women's socioeconomic well-being are essential: self-esteem, participation in household decisions, social capital, and willingness to divorce. These

factors primarily affect the direction of violence against women in society. Socioeconomic empowerment of women has a positive effect on the systems of marital life but can have highly contributed to domestic violence against women. The research findings show increased GBV cases despite several empowerment initiatives in Nairobi, Kenya. Various reports and research findings have established a global increase in GBV despite the rise of civil groups campaigning against the vice. According to the World Bank (2015) report, empowering women economically threatens men's authority in society and households, increasing the chances of GBV. When a man's authority is threatened, they tend to establish their dominance through violence, which is directed toward women. Therefore, in some cases, the socioeconomic empowerment of women might lead to increased chances of GBV.

Based on research studies, GBV affects the mental and psychological wellbeing of the victims, resulting in depression (Women's Aid, 2017). Victims of GBV tend to suffer from depression and anxiety when they interact with women who have a proper relationship with their partners. They, therefore, tend to isolate themselves and avoid social interactions. This might result in the disempowerment of women who are victims of domestic violence. The researcher found that women who stay in relationships that are characterized by abuse and violence face challenges such as disrespect, victimization, threats, fear, and psychological and emotional imbalance. These issues affect the victims' social lives, degrading their socioeconomic well-being. Women suffering from GBV lack self-esteem and confidence to initiate projects that would improve their economic wellbeing. Most of the people living in Nairobi have been brought up by religious families; therefore, they possess strong religious beliefs, which mostly encourage women to stay in abusive relationships. The African culture trains women to remain in marriages that are not working for fear of divorce (Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV), 2014). Women who seek to uphold the traditional and religious principles of marriage represent the highest number of domestic violence victims. Such victims suffer from GBV, poverty, suffering, and disempowerment.

The researcher found that the socioeconomic empowerment of women has had a positive effect in curbing GBV against women in Nairobi, Kenya. Despite many domestic cases, Kenya has established initiatives to empower women to stand up for their rights. Through different NGOs, women are empowered to seek legal

help and report cases of GBV. Most women in Nairobi County have basic educational backgrounds and skill training. Therefore, most women contribute to the family income and are involved in financial decision-making. The ability of a woman to stand up for their rights and seek help has led to reduced cases of GBV and femicide in Nairobi, Kenya. Women who are active in social activities, earn income, and have better socioeconomic status are less likely to experience GBV in Nairobi, Kenya. In summary, women's socioeconomic empowerment has reduced GBV in Kenya.

B. Summary of Research Findings

The findings of the research study were based on the research questions raised in the first chapter. The findings also fulfill the study's purpose and validate the study's main argument. Based on the first research question on the forms of GBV against women in Nairobi County, various conditions and cases were identified. Most of the women in Nairobi County experience spousal battery, which is the physical infliction of pain by their partners. Such topics include spousal beating, burning, knife stabbing, and maiming. Other women experience sexual assault. Sexual assaults include marital rape and sexual abuse of girls and women. In other cases, women in Nairobi County experienced economic violence. Economic violence includes financial controls by men, lack of involvement in household financial decisions, and confinement to house chores. Femicide was also discussed as a form of GBV in Nairobi County. Mostly, femicide is the last result of continuous GBV. However, it can also be considered as a form of GBV. NGOs and police reports of femicide in Nairobi County, Kenya, reported several cases. Other forms of GBV that were found in this research include public humiliation by spouses, insults by spouses, continuous threatening of women, and chasing of women from homesteads by their partners.

The second research question sought to investigate the strategies that women employ to cope with GBV in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings of the research regarding the research question found that women use various ways to cope with GBV. One of the coping strategies is to get involved in community social groups. Such groups help them empower themselves and share their experiences with other women. Another coping strategy employed by women is isolation from social circles.

Most of the women who undergo GBV feel lonely and hence isolate themselves from social groups in society. They partake in activities that separate them from the community. Such women feel ashamed of the violence they go through at home; hence, they opt to be alone. They avoid sharing their ordeals and deal with them alone. The research found that most of the women who undergo GBV believe that their partners will change. Such women tend to cover for their partner's violence by staying alone and keeping to themselves. The research also found that most women seek spiritual guidance and help from religious leaders. Most women involve religious leaders to solve their marital problems; hence, they seek help from churches, mosques, and other sanctuaries. In rare cases, women seek professional help from psychologists and psychiatrists. A small percentage seeks help from the legal authorities and civil social organizations. Coping strategies differ from one victim to another. Women across the globe employ several strategies.

The third research question sought to expound on the mitigating strategies that are used by society for women facing GBV. The research found that the community is extensively involved in fighting GBV. Therefore, they use various methods to help women facing GBV. One of the strategies used is to set up safe spaces for the county government of Nairobi. The safe spaces provide an avenue where women can report cases of gender-based violence and get guidance on what steps to take. Secondly, NGOs such as FIDA and Haki Africa provide legal help to women going through GBV. The women can seek sanctuary from such organizations. These organizations offer guidance and counseling to women who go through GBV, as well as provide legal help.

The society has also taken initiative in educating women who experience violence to seek help. Religious organizations and NGOs have set up structures that empower women to report GBV cases. These organizations offer sanctuary to women who escape gender-based violence. They are mostly set up in informal settlements in Nairobi, such as Mathare, Kibera, and Kawangware. The government of Kenya has also set up structures that help the victims of GBV in the country. They have set up various policies that protect the interests of women in the country. The government, through the Ministry of Gender and Social Services, also offers training across the country to women who undergo gender-based violence. In such activity, they empower women to seek legal help and leave violent relationships. They also

educate them to identify forms of GBV. The mitigating strategies employed by the society in Nairobi County are the most effective in coping with GBV.

Finally, the research was based on the argument that GBV negatively affects the socio-economic wellbeing of women in Nairobi County. The research findings validate the main idea of the study. As seen from various research and secondary data that were evaluated, the socio-economic wellbeing of women who are going through GBV is negatively affected. The empowerment of women helps in reducing GBV. However, the same charge was found to cause GBV. In such cases, an empowered woman sometimes poses a threat to the power dynamics in a household, which can be the basis for GBV. In other cases, an empowered woman is involved in household decision making which reduces the violence against them.

At the same time, empowered women can stand up against violence and seek help. They are also able to leave a violent relationship and start a new life. The research also found that GBV has a significant effect on the socioeconomic wellbeing of women. Women who go through GBV experience psychological instability, hence affecting their daily lives. Such women are withdrawn and live in isolation. Their productivity is negatively affected, leading to a reduction in their ability to work. Such women drain their energy coping with family issues and forget about their wellbeing. They are likely to be depressed and stressed. The psychological effects of GBV often affect the socio-economic well-being of women in Nairobi County. Despite being empowered, women undergoing GBV always think that their partner will change. Hence, when they seek help, they have been drained emotionally, financially, and socially. Therefore, GBV negatively affects the socioeconomic wellbeing of Nairobi County, Kenya.

C. Conclusions

The research findings are based on studies that were previously conducted by scholars, documentations by research organizations and secondary data from different sources. The different sources focus on women in intimate relationships, married or divorced. The conclusions are drawn from secondary sources that target women over 18. The findings showed that most women living within Nairobi County are victims of GBV from family members. The victim mostly knows the perpetrators of GBV on an intimate level. The findings illustrate that the GBV against women in

Nairobi County is primarily due to the African culture, which gives men power over women. Most of the women who face GBV are bound by customs and traditions. Traditional African marriage limits the ability of women in a relationship. The African conventional culture gives men power over women; hence, they believe they own them. The researcher also found that patriarchal structures promote GBV against women in Kenya. The systems that elevate men as the head of the family and providers support GBV in Nairobi County. Economic status was also found to be a cause of GBV. Low-income families tend to experience higher degrees of GBV than wealthy families.

The research indicated that women experienced different forms of GBV. Most of the women in Nairobi's country share the experience of spousal battery; this is where women are either beaten or physically harmed by weapons such as knives. The spousal battery is mainly experienced in informal settlement areas of Nairobi (National Crime Research Center, 2018). The other form of violence experienced is sexual assault. Most women in Nairobi County are forced into sexual intercourse without their consent by their partners. Married women are said to undergo marital rape in most cases. Economic violence was also found to be a rampant form of GBV in Nairobi County. Most women are not involved in household financial decisions, while others have limited access to family resources. The research also found that cases of femicide are on the rise in Nairobi County. Most of the murder cases of women have been caused by their intimate partners. Other forms of GBV in Nairobi include psychological violence and threats.

The research findings showed that most women who experienced GBV were withdrawn from society. They tend to isolate themselves and seek coping methods on their own—women who are separated end up depressed and lonely. In rare cases, women who are experiencing GBV in Nairobi abuse drugs as a coping mechanism. These cases are primarily reported in informal settlements such as Kibera and Mathare (Gichago, 2020). Women who opt to be silent about their experiences of GBV tend to be emotionally unstable. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2017), GBV victims might end up committing suicide. Other coping mechanisms found in this research include seeking asylum in religious organizations.

Most of the women who experience GBV tend to seek refuge in religious organizations. Some of them take up religious roles as a way of distraction. Some

even seek help from religious leaders and their fellow congregants. NGOs were also found to be effective in helping victims of GBV in Nairobi County. The county of Nairobi has also set up safe zones within the city to allow victims of GBV to seek help. Coping strategies differ from one victim to the other. The researcher concluded that most women protect their partners due to societal judgments. Victims of GBV mostly blame themselves for the violence, hence taking long before seeking help from the authorities. Impediments of reporting GBV have limited the authorities from acting on such cases. Victims often hide and protect GBV perpetrators, which makes it difficult to fight the vice.

In conclusion, the research found that GBV affects the socioeconomic wellbeing of women in Nairobi County. Most of the women who experience GBV are not likely to act to improve their socioeconomic wellbeing. They are primarily unstable and lack the drive to improve their well-being. However, empowerment programs are effective in the fight against GBV against women. Involvement in social groups, economic workshops, and training was found to be effective in empowering women within Nairobi, Kenya. Empowered women tend to stand up for their rights; hence, they will likely report GBV incidences. The research concludes that women's empowerment is an effective way of improving the socioeconomic wellbeing of women as well as fighting against GBV. Through empowerment, women learn how to protect themselves as well as their children against GBV. Empowerment initiatives also help women to seek alternative financial incomes to improve their economic status. In summary, eradication of GBV requires the involvement of many parties and success successfully. Improvement of socioeconomic wellbeing is one way of equipping women to fight against GBV, but more methods should be employed to fight against vice in the world.

According to Judith Butler, gender is not performed through a single act but through ritualized repetition. Therefore, repetition gives gender stability, which is repeated gender performance per society's norms. According to Butler, gender is supposed to be what people do daily and not what they are (Butler, 2004). However, in the world, specifically in Kenya, work is reserved for women and men. Despite women trying to break the barrier and close the gap with men, there are a lot of people, especially men, who are undermining such a noble process. Unlike women, men get most of the opportunities and have to balance work, careers, and family. In

her gender performativity posits, Butler argues that the acts that either make us a man or woman are what constitute gender. A society that believes that it is only men who can provide for the family puts the lives of women at risk as they will continue being oppressed by men. She argues that people are free to do what they are capable of regardless of being a man or woman. Butler argues that if women are empowered economically, cases of GBV go down.

Donna Haraway was among the influential scholars who later turned to philosophy to help understand how gender helped shape knowledge production about nature. In her work, Haraway theorizes women as objects and suggests that women are more likely to be treated as objects that are not living in society. She compared women to a Cyborg, a non-living thing that can work on behalf of living things (Haraway, 2013). Just like men, women have a significant role to play in society. However, the role of women in building society is at stake, as men are the frontrunners in almost all sectors. If women are not empowered like men, we have a patriarchal society. In most traditional societies, women were not supposed to talk or instead bring suggestions where men were involved. Like objects, very few women are recognized for their role in society. If there is a hybrid and fluid understanding in society, women will have a chance to work and realize what is best for them.

D. Recommendations

After analyzing the findings and outcome of this research, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

First, women in Nairobi County need social interactions that educate them on how to cope with GBV. Women experiencing GBV need to attend seminars and workshops, join social help groups, attend group counseling, and share face-to-face experiences. The researcher recommends that the national government, the county government of Nairobi, NGOs, and religious institutions collaborate to develop a framework that engages women who experience GBV. These engagements will be meant to help women who have difficulty in decision-making on GBV incidences.

Secondly, economic status and educational background are causes of GBV. Lack of equal opportunities for the girl child and women is a disadvantage to the socioeconomic well-being of women. Therefore, the researcher recommends that

policymakers take the initiative to make laws and policies that offer equal opportunities for women in Nairobi City. The county government of Nairobi should also offer leeway for women who are low-income earners to do business freely. This aims to improve women's social and economic welfare in informal settlements within Nairobi City, Kenya.

Thirdly, the research recommends the involvement of men in the fight against GBV. Training and workshops should target men to eliminate the misconceptions that the African culture has planted about the place of women in society. Men are the key perpetrators of GBV; hence, they need to be involved in the process of fighting the vice. They need to be taught equality features and requirements to break the long-standing patriarchal structures. To realize the results in the fight against GBV, men in society should be involved in all the steps of the fight.

Fourthly, the researcher recommends that media houses and services should be involved in spearheading the equal rights of women. Media plays a big in the spread of news and information. Therefore, they should be at the forefront of campaigning against GBV. The media is expected to reach out to women who are isolated and lonely due to the GBV they go through. They can pass the information on the services offered and safe places to seek refuge against GBV.

Fifthly, the researcher recommends that the national government incorporate equality between men and women into the education curriculum. By incorporating gender studies in the curriculum, children are nurtured at a younger age on how to relate with each other. This will be a better way to fight against cultural misbeliefs that exist in the society on gender roles. Through education, girls are empowered to stand up for their rights, while boys are trained to respect women at a younger age. Gender studies can change the perception of the coming generation regarding GBV.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that this study be used as a basis for empowerment programs to end GBV in Nairobi City, Kenya. The research has incorporated several secondary sources, which include published surveys, reports, articles, and academic research papers. Therefore, the information in this paper can be used to develop good empowerment programs targeting Nairobi women who experience GBV.

E. Suggestions for Further Studies

Given the criticality of the presented subject, the assessment of the effect of postmodern feminism in the fight against GBV is a genuine next step for subsequent studies on the subject. Additional research could include the assessment of the contribution of women's socioeconomic empowerment in the stability of a family setup and the fight against GBV. Finally, this research also forms the premise for the study of the role of men in promoting the socioeconomic well-being of women and the fight against GBV.

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