**Report on domestic violence against women**

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**Authors Note**

 **This report on domestic violence against women was prepared by Ezekiel K Kiprotich, a researcher dedicated to understanding and addressing gender-based violence. This research involved a deep review from existing literatures, past studies and global data from trusted worldwide sources like World Health Organization, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) and various government and one governmental organization.**

**The purpose of this research is to create awareness on the deeply rooted violence against women and to inspire collective actions toward eradicating it. The author appreciated the survivors of domestic violence who shared their experience bringing forth a better understanding of this complex issue.**

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**Abstract**

Violence against women is one of the most devastating and widespread human right violations in the world affecting million yet it remains unreported due to fear, trauma and shame. The incidences of domestic violence, emotional violence, economical violence, sexual assault, rape, molestation, harassment at work place, exploitation, are increasing in our country and across the world. It comes in different forms ranging from infanticide, genital mutilation, child marriage, sexual abuse, domestic violence, sex selected abortions, cyber violence, honor killings and many others. This report delves into the various dimensions of domestic violence against women, its causes, history, profound impact on individual and family, and the measures being implemented to address and mitigate its impact. The report aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue, supported by empirical data and scholarly research, while highlighting the importance of continued efforts to eradicate this form of violence. By shedding light on this critical issue, the report advocates for comprehensive measures to empower women, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and foster societal change.

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**Introduction**

**Defining violence against women**

 Women Violence against women is defend as ‘‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’’. This definition was given by The UN Declaration (1993) keeping in mind elimination of violence against women [1a

**Introduction**
Domestic violence is one of the most insidious forms of gender-based violence, disproportionately affecting women worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately one in three women globally experiences physical or sexual violence in her lifetime, primarily from an intimate partner (WHO, 2021).further more in Another survey conducted by UNESCO on 10th December 2020 on a group of journalist, it was found out that s73% of the journalists who responded have experienced online violations in their work,25% of those violations being physical thread,18 have been sexually violated and 30 being mentally harassed a(UNESCO2020). In 2005 in India Harpreet Kaur a 19-year-old woman was set on fire by her husband and his family, she lost consciousness but was rushed by her father in law to the hospital being in the verge of death, although she regained conciseness and gave her statement to the magistrate, sadly she died five day later. Another survey carried out by the Kenya National Demographic Health Survey (KNDHS) in 2022, found out that 34% of women have experienced physical violation since the age of 15. This issue remains deeply rooted in patriarchal norms and systemic inequality, perpetuating cycles of abuse and limiting women’s access to resources, safety, and autonomy. After a generation of silence, domestic violence is slowly becoming a topic of popular media and academic cru tiny in developing countries. Sadly, some countries for example India domestic violence is still legally condoned. This report examines domestic violence against women through a multidisciplinary lens, analyzing its causes, manifestations, and consequences while proposing actionable solutions to address its prevalence.

**History of domestic violence**

A far as history is concerned, domestic violence has been witnessed thought the centuries and a big factor of that is women being seen as property to the man the community she lives in at large rather than the human she is. below are some domestic violent laws that have been recorded through history which depreciated and abused women and had no rights under r the law. If a woman is caught committing adultery her husband would drown her without him being guilty

 *An eye for an eye (1750 to 1792*)

 This is the oldest written law regarding violence regarding violence in the assembly of Hammurabi of282 rules that ancient King Hammurabi used. It meant a series of if-then, for example if someone does this to you then this must happen to him, however this applied only to men as women were not seen as citizen I the kingdom. If woman is caught committing adultery then her husband would drown her without him being guilty.

 ***The roman empire***

In the roman empire, a husband could legally kill or enslave his wife if found committing adultery.

***The early catholic church***

In the 15th century, the catholic church established its “Rules of marriage,” which proclaimed a husband was a judge over his wife and he could abuse her for an accepted form of discipline that would benefit her soul.

***The puritans***

The puritans who settled in North America in the 17th century allowed men to physically punish their wives if the violence did not become so extreme that the neighbors we disturbed

All the above are some of the many diabolical evidences in the written history that violence against women has existed back before our fore fathers were born and sadly up to now this issue has not been addressed properly yet

**Forms and Manifestations**
Violence manifests in various forms, each with devastating effects on women:

1. **Physical Abuse**: Includes hitting, choking, or using weapons to harm the victim. Physical violence often escalates over time, posing severe health risks.
2. **Emotional and Psychological Abuse**: Involves manipulation, intimidation, gaslighting, and isolation. It erodes self-esteem and fosters dependence on the abuser.
3. **Sexual Abuse**: Ranges from marital rape to coerced sexual acts, often accompanied by physical violence.
4. **Economic Abuse**: Restricting access to finances, employment, or education, rendering women financially dependent on their abusers.
5. **Digital Abuse**: A growing issue where perpetrators use technology to harass, stalk, or manipulate their partners.

These forms of abuse often occur simultaneously, creating a complex web of control that traps victims in abusive relationships.

**Factors contributing to violence against women**

1. **Individual Factors**:
	* + **History of Abuse**: it evidence woman who has grown up throughout her child hood life seeing other women being abused often end up being abused and see it a normal.in a survey conducted by the world health organization in 2022.a woman living with an abusive husband said that ,”before this ,I have always thought that that is how a husband should live with her wife ,” this statement made it clear to the researchers that throughout her life, she has been abused or have seen other women being abused hence she law nothing odd about what her husband was doing to her
		+ **Mental Health Issues**: A woman with a mental issue is more likely to cause violence due to some behaviors with I return may trigger a partner or a person next to her to react violently against her.
		+ **Substance Abuse**: partners who abuse drugs are more likely to be violent against their partners, this may involve not only sexual violence but also physical and psychological violence as alcohol increases the risk of aggression.
2. **Relational Factors**:
	* + **Power and Control**: Power and control has been the key factor to violence against women as in most cases a person which most of the time a male may turn to violence and aggression in order to make a woman be submissive to him and to express his dominance toward her this being a major course as according to research and history. A man has always had a tendency of being in control.
		+ **Dependency**: Women who depend financially on them in most if not all of the time often end up being trapped in an abusive relationship due to the fear of losing their economic stability if they leave their relationship. I a survey conducted by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) in Kenya, it was concluded that 60 percent of women living in urban cities live in an abusive relationship mainly because they depend on their abusive rich partner and have fear of not living comfortably of loosing everything if they leave their relationship.
3. **Community Factors**:
	* + **Lack of Social Support**: Women often have fear and they remain silent due to lack of social support. furthermore, a lot of women often ridicule another if she ends up complaining that her husband has violated her.
		+ **Cultural Norms**: some outdated culture which makes women legally victims of violence are still embedded in our country even in the world of today. A good example of this being the ongoing gender-based violence in the Maasai community in Kenya where a lot of women are victims of rape and end up being mothers at a very tender age.
4. **Societal Factors**:
	* + **Gender Inequality**: Societies with pronounced gender inequalities and patriarchal structures often justified violence against women as they have a deeply rooted belief of male dominance and female submission
		+ **lack of government intervention**; The government have neglected many women

 And have not build legal framework to enable women to report their issues hence

 Making the violators feel safe and they continue doing their bad deeds without fear.

**Consequences of domestic violence toward women**

The consequences of domestic violence against women are severe and far-reaching, impacting physical health, mental well-being, economic stability, and societal harmony.

1. **Physical Health Consequences**:
* **Injuries**: women who have experienced violence often end up getting injuries and under some circumstances are often required to visit hospitals to get treatment. On severe cases they break bones and some often end up getting paralyzed and living the rest of their live on wheel chairs and depending on people.
* **Chronic Health Problems**: Long-term exposure to domestic violence can lead to chronic health issues such as cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal disorders, and reproductive health problems.
1. **Mental Health Consequences**:
* **Psychological Trauma**: In a who study victims who suffered from psychological trauma, were identified through crying easily, not talking to people, fatigue inability to enjoy life and having suicidal thoughts prior to the study. A touching word from a woman in the study were, “I suffered for a long time and swallowed all my pains, that is why I am constantly visiting doctors and taking pills.”
* **Suicide and Self-Harm**: Many women who are victims of violence often end of committing suicide as a way of ending their suffering and sometimes they do self-harm such as burning their skins and hitting their heads on the wall
1. **Economic Consequences**:
* **May Loss of Income**: Domestic violence may sometimes lead reduced productivity or in worst cases loss of jobs which in turn result to financial instability to the victim and her family.
* **Healthcare Costs**: The medical costs associated with treating of the injuries and chronic health problems resulting from violence against women sometimes may be high making the victim struggle to pay the bills.
1. **Societal Consequences**:
* **Intergenerational Impact**: Children who have experienced domestic violence throughout their life time often experience trauma had hate and may even end up repeating this vicious circle in their life time bringing no end to it.
* **Social Instability**: High rates of domestic violence can undermine social stability and cohesion, leading to broader societal issues.

**Barriers faced by women to reporting and seeking help**

* 1. **Retaliation**: Studies have shown women who are victims of violence are undecided whether to report or just to remain silence and heal on their own.
	2. **Financial dependence on the abuser**: Women who often get abused by people they depend on financially often have the fear of loosing everything hence they prefer to remain silent an let the abuse continue.
	3. **Distrust of the law**: Not many people trust the law and have enough knowledge of the law as they fear they may end up reporting and justice may not be served or worse, the law might turn against them
	4. **Victim-blaming attitudes**: Some women who have been abused may end up blaming themselves hence seeing themselves as the guilty ones and not the abusers.
	5. **Immigration status**: which prevent immigrant women from reporting abuse due

to fear of deportation.

**Measurements being taken to combat violence against women**

Measurement to combats violence against women have been taken in various in international forums including the Convention on Eliminating of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the United States, Generation Equality Forum (GEF) by UN Women, and the Protection of Women from Domestic Act in India.

 Below are the effective measures being taken:

* **Education and Awareness:** By educating people and rising awareness against violence against women, it is opted that this measure will decrease the harmful effect of violence against women and it can help to challenge societal norms and beliefs that perpetuate it.
* **Early Intervention and Prevention Programs:** Programs that target at-risk populations, such as young people, can help to prevent domestic violence before it starts.
* **Legal and Policy Reforms:** Strong laws and policies that protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable are essential to addressing domestic violence.
* **Support Services for Victims:** The united Nations (UN) as build shelters in Turkana county in Kenya which has helped in counseling and provided legal assistance that had help victims of violence against women to escape abusive relationships and rebuild their lives.
* **Community-Based Interventions:** Community-based programs that involve collaboration between various sectors can help to create safer communities and prevent domestic violence.
* **Promoting gender equality and challenging harmful cultural norms:** which will help to eradicate certain unnecessary outdated culture and help them to live together in peace and harmony.

**Conclusion**

Conclusion There is long way to go in sensitizing common people that violence against women is a big public health issue and a cause of number of health ailments. While progress have been made, it is clear that it is not enough, there is still much work to be done. Addressing the root causes of domestic violence, such as gender inequality and economic dependency, is crucial for creating lasting change. Continued efforts to raise awareness, promote gender equality, and provide support to victims are essential for combating domestic violence and ensuring the safety and well-being of women worldwide.

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**Appendix**

**Appendix: Definition and Terminology**

* **Violence against women**: Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’
* **Gender inequality**: The unequal treatment of individual based on their gender
* **Economic dependence**: A situation where a person relies on another for financial support.