

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS  
AS A CORRELATE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN  
MUKONO TOWN

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE  
OF BACHELOR OF ARTS WITH EDUCATION OF  
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY

APRIL 2018

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## DECLARATION

I Aryatuha Hellen declare that this dissertation is my work and has never been submitted for the award of any academic qualification before.

Signature: Hellen ..... Date: 25/4/2018 .....

**Aryatuha Hellen**

## APPROVAL

This dissertation entitled 'academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono town' was done under my supervision and has been submitted to the College of Education, Open and Distance e-Learning at Kampala International University with my approval as the supervisor.

Signature:  ..... Date:  .....

**KAMULEGEYA SIRAJE**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear parents, relatives and friends.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My appreciation goes to all those persons who made this study a reality. I am grateful to the academic staff of the College of Education, Open and Distance e-Learning at Kampala International University and the respondents who participated in this study. Thanks also go to my dear parents, relatives and friends for their support towards my education. God bless you all.

## KEY TERMS

**Child abuse:** Mistreatment of children.

**Domestic violence:** Torture in the home that could be emotional, physical, economic, social, psychological and mental torture.

**Academic achievement:** School scores and the grades attained.

## ABSTRACT

This study investigated academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono town. This was after the realisation that there was a strong relationship between academic achievement and domestic violence. The effects of domestic violence on educational achievement are real and cannot be underestimated. Domestic violence negatively affects the victims, their peers and the whole society. Exposure in primary school to a higher proportion of peers from families affected by domestic violence negatively affects their secondary school completion, college enrollment and degree attainment while reporting of domestic violence has a strong effect on peer academic achievement and violence that has not been reported has significant negative effects on peers. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to find out the causes of domestic violence in Mukono town; and to examine how domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono town. To achieve these objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions: what causes of domestic violence in Mukono town? How does domestic violence affect academic achievement in Mukono town? The study design took the form of a case study design that involved an in-depth and holistic study of academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono town. The study also involved purposive sampling in which the data sought were qualitative. A sample of 50 respondents was selected for the study. The sample included politicians, government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) officials, students, activists, academics, mothers, teachers, educationists and opinion leaders. The data were collected using interviews and observations for primary data and documents analysis for secondary data. Data analysis began with the editing of the data of errors. This was then followed by the qualitative analysis of the data. This involved the literal description and narration of the emerging issues out of which authentic conclusions were made. The study found out that the causes of domestic violence in Mukono town were cultural, social, economic and psychological factors deeply rooted in society. The study also found out that domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono town by negatively impacting on the physical, mental, emotional, social and economic strength of a student. The study concludes by noting that domestic violence in Mukono town will for the years to come persist not until the causes that are deeply rooted in the psyche of society are addressed. Further, the study concludes by noting that given the large positive correlation between academic performance and domestic violence, the

gap between the peaceful and stable homes and malfunctioning families will persist. The study recommends the need for strengthening of the family values, the screening for adverse childhood experiences, particularly domestic violence exposure, and devoting greater academic and social service resources to supporting these children may help them recover from the effects of violence exposure and set a more positive course in their future school achievement. In addition, further research may seek to explore more specifically the role of child protection or other service interventions in the outcomes for children exposed to domestic violence. The study recommends the need for every citizen to ensure that in their small way they work towards eliminating domestic violence since its spillovers impact on several aspect of life including academic achievement. Students who have been exposed to domestic violence need to be helped to go over the abuse and be empowered with safety plans to take when they next encounter similar situations. Those small efforts will add up to produce more friendly homes and hence the nation.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background, problem statement, purpose, specific objectives, research questions, significance and scope of the study.

#### 1.2 Background of the study

Domestic violence is a significant problem the world over [including Uganda]. It leads to serious medical and emotional costs for victims and their children, but also has important negative spillovers. Experiencing domestic violence during primary school leads to lower academic achievement in the long-run (Scott, et. al., nd.). In USA, over 24% of women and 13% of men 18 and older have been victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner. Victims incur significant medical and emotional costs and their children exhibit aggressive behavior, depression, decreased social competence and diminished academic performance (Scott, et. al., nd). Primary school children exposed to domestic violence negatively affect the academic achievement of their peers. Given the large positive correlation between poverty and domestic violence, these spillovers could partly explain the rich-poor achievement gap. A person's education is closely linked to his life chances, income and well being (Battle & Lewis, 2002 in Adejobi, et al., 2013). Therefore, it is important to have a clear understanding of what benefits or hinders one's educational attainment. Education generally is seen as an agent of socialization and integration of a child or an adult into the norms of the society. Equally it is the process of transmitting the culture of a society to the learners in a formalized setting. Unequivocally, it is seen as the bedrock of any nation. In order to ensure the growth and development of a nation, it becomes imperative for right policy to be in place to allow for effective planning and execution of educational programmes. Academic performance has been largely associated with many factors. Most students in secondary schools in Uganda are daily confronted with challenges of coping with academics under serious emotional strains occasioned by long walk to school, poor school environment and been taught by unmotivated teachers. Coupled with this, are the parents

who toil to provide for the needs of the family. These would definitely not augur well for academic success.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

The effects of domestic violence on education achievement cannot be underestimated. It negatively affects the victims, their peers and the whole society. Exposure in primary school to a higher proportion of peers from families affected by domestic violence negatively affects their secondary school completion, college enrollment and degree attainment while reporting of domestic violence has a strong effect on peer academic achievement and violence that has not been reported has significant negative effects on peers (Scott, et. al., nd). Further, one additional parent reporting domestic violence is worth an estimated increase of \$550,000 in that classroom cohort's total lifetime earnings. Academic achievement is an important parameter in measuring success in students. According Bhawna et al. (2015), domestic violence is such a factor which is the foundation for children's development, as such in terms of family problems, family's socio-economic status and plays a vital role in educational achievements of the students. Bhawna, et al. posits that home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. He notes that domestic violence in context to the child's performance affects his reaction to life situations and his level of performance. Success at school is associated with domestic violence factors, as these factors can greatly affect young children's cognitive skills. Disadvantaged children [children with poor social background and facing more number of domestic violence factors] start schooling with significantly lower cognitive skills than their more advantaged peers.

### **1.4 Purpose of the study [general objective]**

The purpose of this study was to investigate academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono Town.

### **1.5 Specific objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To find out the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town.

2. To examine how domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono Town.

### **1.6 Research questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town?
2. How does domestic violence affect academic achievement in Mukono Town?

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

Data on academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono town is sketchy and often generalized. Most studies on domestic violence in Uganda tend to be disentangled from studies on academic achievement. Thus, there was need to generate data that correlates academic achievement and domestic violence. This study is hoped to provide insights on how to mitigate domestic violence since it has spillovers that undermine academic achievement. The findings, conclusions and recommendations will hopefully, benefit the promoters of education and those against domestic violence (i.e., politicians, government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), activists, academics, mothers, teachers, educationists and opinion leaders). Thus, they will have to base their decisions and actions on researched information other than subjective judgments. The researcher hopes that this study will form a basis for further research into domestic violence and academic achievement in schools across Uganda.

### **1.8 Scope of the study**

The study focused on academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono Town. The study was qualitative and conducted in February 2018 using a case study design and purposive sampling technique. A sample of 50 respondents from Mukono Town in the neighbourhood of Kikooza was selected for the study. The respondents included: politicians, government officials, NGOs workers, academics, students, educationists, activists, mothers, teachers and opinion leaders. The data were collected using interviews and observations [for primary data] and documents analysis [for secondary data]. The themes investigated included: causes of domestic violence; and effects of domestic violence on academic performance.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter focused on the causes of domestic violence and effects of domestic violence on academic achievement which all relate to the objectives of the study.

#### 2.2 Domestic violence – what are the causes?

##### 2.2.1 An overview of the genesis of domestic violence

Perpetrators of domestic violence come from all socioeconomic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. The stresses of poverty and the abuse of such substances as alcohol and drugs contribute to the problem. From the social and legal concept, domestic violence refers to any abuse—including physical, emotional, sexual or financial—between intimate partners, often living in the same household. The term is often used specifically to designate physical assaults upon women by their male partners, but though rarer, the victim may be a male abused by his female partner and the term may also be used regarding abuse of both women and men by same-sex partners (Domestic Violence, 2014). In USA, the revived women's movement of the 1970s brought the issue of domestic violence into the open. Feminists encouraged battered women to speak up and to refuse to accept blame for their victimization. Women's organizations pressured police to treat domestic violence as they would treat any other assault, established battered women's shelters where victims and their children could find safety, help, counseling and legal advice (ibid). The increased visibility of these campaigns raised public awareness of the issue. Courts have been increasingly willing to convict abusers and to allow women who have killed their abusers to use a self-defense plea when applicable.

##### 2.2.2 The feminist theory

The feminist theory views violence as a manifestation of the patriarchal structure in our culture, which is reflected in the patterns of behaviors and attitudes of individuals and an expression of male domination of females (Denmark, Krauss, Halpem & Sechzer, 2006; Davies, 1994). Thus,

the origins of violence are located in the social structure and the complex set of values, traditions and beliefs which relate to gender inequality. Norms embody values, social practices and gender roles which create sexist attitudes giving rise to inequality between men and women. This inequitable organization is one of the fundamental factors for domestic violence. The feminist theory looks at the institution of patriarchy and argues that battering mirrors male power and control over females. Women's experiences are often described as inferior because male domination influences all aspects of life. This theory according to Madhurima (1996) fails to explain why the most powerful uses violence against the least powerful even if his power is not challenged by the subordinate.

### **2.2.3 Bio-psychosocial perspective**

There is also the bio-psychosocial perspective that explains domestic violence. This theory is an attempt to tie together biological [testosterone levels, alcohol abusive] factors and social factors such as social stress and quality of the relationship. The association of alcohol and violence is well documented. Substance abuse leads to out-of-control behavior. It seems that some men are changed into irrational friends by drink. However, many researchers generally do not consider drug and alcohol abuse to be the cause of violence. They find that it can contribute to accelerated or increased aggression. Thus, alcohol and drug abuse may or may not be a direct cause of domestic violence. Farmer (1979) points out that poor communication skills and lack of respect for other partner leads to domestic violence. When families have not gained enough skills in discussing problems it is easier just to use violence as a way of showing their feelings. With regards to respect, Farmer is of the view that it is very difficult for anyone to hit someone they respect. A man who hits his wife does not feel basic respect for his wife as a human being.

Frequently there is no workable solution for female victims of domestic violence. For some victims the unrelenting cycle of violence produces diminished self-esteem, helplessness, depression and exaggerated feelings of imprisonment, even the belief that they deserve abuse. More material obstacles stand in the way of most victims. Many are financially dependent on their abusers, and, since many abuse victims are mothers, they particularly fear being unable to support their children if they leave a violent partner. Many fear reporting the crime because the police can offer no reliable protection against retaliation. One of the worst problems is that typical abusers often become most violent and vengeful precisely when women try to leave;

numbers of women have been murdered by male partners when they tried to press charges or win orders of protection.

Psychologists and many researchers have always been interested in a way to adequately explain why it is that so many intimate human relationships evolve into the violence and barbarism of domestic violence. There are many theories that have taken shape overtime that attempt to explain domestic violence. There are social explanations, psychological theories and others. There is however no consensus on what might be the primary cause on domestic violence. As with many phenomena regarding human experience, no single approach appears to cover all cases.

#### **2.2.4 Access to resources**

The resources [social, educational, political and economic] a person commands can influence his level of violence. A person with little education, low job prestige and income or poor interpersonal skills, may use violence to compensate for real or perceived lack of resources and maintain dominance. Financial difficulties in a household are known to have the man in a relationship react violently with feelings of inadequacy. Since men feel that arranging for adequate finances is their responsibility, failing to do so cuts a man thin and could respond with a desperate attempt at reassertion of authority with violence (Farmer, 1979; Madhurima, 1996).

#### **2.2.5 Sociological phenomenon**

Madhurima (1996) observes how the subculture of violence is a sociological phenomenon. He explains that there is a subculture of violence in which some groups within society hold values that permit and even encourage the use of violence. In such societies, family violence will occur more frequently in violent societies than in peaceful ones.

#### **2.2.6 Cultural factors**

Cultural factors such aspolygamy, infidelity, the power of the extended family over the married couple, and the almost universal institution of bride price as underlying the widespread abuse of wives and domestic violence. Violence is also said to be initiated by jealousy. Sexual jealousy can elicit violence in both sexes (Farmer, 1979). When a wife is seen as challenging her

husband's authority and prerogatives by inquiring about his extra-marital involvements, it results into her abuse (Madhurima, 1996). On the hand, in traditional African society a married woman would have minimal contact with men other than her husband. However, this is much less possible today, especially when women work. Yet, tradition minded husbands feel threatened by the interaction between their wives and other men and may act violently because of that threat imagined or real.

Other commonly reported causes of arguments that escalate to violence are disputes about the husband's traditional economic obligations to his extended family, now seen as a direct threat to the economic survival of the nuclear household. These cultural explanations emphasize the close link between violence and the enforcement of conformity to traditional roles for women and dominance for their husbands. They see violence as emerging out of society that threatens women as property, socializes women to be passive and the like. In this sense, the cultural arguments may merge with those based on gender inequality.

### **2.2.7 Social learning theory**

Another explanation of the causes of domestic violence from a social standpoint is the social learning theory. According to the social learning theory, patterns of domestic violence may arise from learned behavior (Farmer, 1979). With so many households in the country reporting problems with domestic violence, there are millions of children growing up watching regular examples of violence before them. Children could learn this kind of behavior and use it in their own lives. Statistics show that 73% of male abusers had grown up in a family where they saw their mother beaten or experienced abuses themselves (Alexander, 1991). In the same vein, Jarman (1991) asserts that using the Freudian model, which claims that all mental illness stems from traumatic child trauma; one can see a direct correlation between violence in the family of orientation and violence within the family of procreation. Thus, social learning theory as a family based theory examines the level of family conflict and the indirect lessons children learn about the relationship between violence and love.

### **2.2.8 Mental character of the perpetrator**

The explanation of domestic violence that appeals to psychological causes places the focus on the mental character of the perpetrator. The psychological profile of such a character includes a pattern of sudden bursts of anger, poor impulse control and poor self-esteem. The psychological frustration aggression theory holds that aggression and violence are caused by individual frustration (Coleman & Cressey, 1987). People become frustrated when they want something they do not have and the stronger the blocked desire, the stronger the frustration. The frustrated person may lash out at the source of his frustration or in the case of displaced hostility, at someone else. This frustration aggression theory is the most explanations of violence in a family. However, it has also its problems. Frustration does not always provide aggression. All of us are frustrated to some degree, but only some of us are aggressive.

## **2.3 Effects of domestic violence on academic achievement**

### **2.3.1 Poor academic achievement**

A key goal of education is to ensure that every student has a chance to excel, both in school and in life. School performance in high school level depends on a student's mental and physical abilities which are influenced by other factors [such as domestic violence]. Studies carried out in a number of countries demonstrate that domestic violence influences to a great extent the educational and co-curricular achievements of students (Bhawna et al. (2015) by influencing the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. Several authors have stated that the stress of severe domestic violence suppresses children's academic achievement (Koenen, et al., 2003) or that school absences caused by staying home to protect mothers may account for poorer academic achievement (Cunningham & Baker, 2004). Studies of children's exposure to both parental intimate partner violence (IPV) and child maltreatment (CM) reveal negative associations with children's social, emotional and behavioral adjustment, health, mental health, and school performance (Evans, Davies & DiLillo, 2008; Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt & Kenny, 2003; Trickett & McBride-Chang, 1995; Wolfe, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre-Smith & Jaffe, 2003). However, CM and exposure to IPV experiences commonly co-occur for children, with over half (56.8%) of children in a recent U.S. national survey experiencing exposure to both IPV and CM

in their lifetimes (Hamby, Finkelhor, Turner & Ormrod, 2010). Yet, little research addresses the individual and combined associations of children's exposure to IPV and CM with their success at school.

### **2.3.2 Constant fights and rebellion against authority**

Children witnessing violence in the home suffer serious cognitive, behavioral, emotional and developmental impairments which significantly alter their lives (Jaffe, 1990). In addition, school-aged children who have witnessed domestic violence are prone to poor academic performance, constant fighting with peers and rebellion against adult authority (National Center on Women and Family Law, 1994). Adolescents raised in an abusive environment are dramatically more likely to be runaways, engage in teenage prostitution or other delinquent behavior; prone to substance abuse, suicide attempts and commit sexual assaults (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1985). In Oregon, 68% of juvenile offenders on treatment programs had witnessed the abuse of their mother and or were subjected to abuse themselves (Rhoades & Parker, 1981). Studies show that in 50 - 70% of the cases in which a parent abuses another parent, the children are physically abused as well (Bowker, et al., 1988). Moreover, many male children experiencing domestic violence grow up to become abusive in adulthood (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986).

### **2.3.4 Depression and anxiety of learners and their caregivers**

There are several indirect mechanisms of influence used to explain the effects of domestic violence on children. Rossman and Rosenberg (1997) have suggested that the effects of domestic violence on children are the result of a failure to meet the developmental needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Other researchers posit that the hostility and aggression of the marital relationship may be carried over in the form of negative emotions or responses to children (Hughes, 1997). Other investigators suggest that domestic violence influences parental behavior, and that change in parental behavior is responsible for many of the negative outcomes observed in children. Cummings and Davies (1994) found that inter-parent conflict may result in inconsistent and negative discipline, as well as ineffective child monitoring. Similarly, Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, and Zak (1985) found that maternal stress in domestic violence situations significantly impairs the mother's parental functioning. This impairment was found to predict child adjustment significantly more than simply witnessing domestic violence. The indirect

impact of domestic violence on child behavior was also addressed by English, Marshall, and Stewart (2003). These researchers found that domestic violence greatly harmed family functioning, the caregiver's health and well-being, and the quality of the caregiver's interaction with the child. These deficits in family functioning were subsequently related to problems in child functioning and health.

Studies have shown significant rates of depression among women victimized by domestic violence (Gellert, 1997; Hughes, 1997). This depression may affect the parent-child relationship and place children at risk for psychopathology and other forms of maladjustment. In a review of the literature on the relationship between parental depression and child functioning, Downey and Coyne (1990) confirm that depression resulting from marital conflict has significant implications for children, suggesting that depressed mothers experience difficulty in being warm and consistent toward their children (Weissman & Paykel, 1974). They have little meaningful interaction; as such effortful behavior exceeds the capacity of their reduced energy levels (Fisher, Kokes, Harder, & Jones, 1980). The depressed mothers from this study were also less vocal, spontaneous, and positive. All these behaviors are indicative of neglect on the part of depressed mothers. In fact, depression has been identified as one of the greatest risk factors for child neglect (Smokowski & Wodarski, 1996). Hence, the relationship between domestic violence and child neglect may be the function of maternal depression.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the study area, research design, sample framework, sample size, methods of data collection, data analysis and limitations of the study.

#### **3.2 Area of study**

Mukono Town lies 12 miles east of Kampala on the Kampala–Jinja highway (i.e., the route by road to Eastern Uganda and neighbouring Kenya). It is the largest town in Mukono District and hosts numerous schools, businesses, hotels and lodges, shopping malls, supermarkets, bookstores, offices of local NGOs, nightclubs, places of worship, clinics, informal trade and home to the Uganda Christian University. The last three decades have seen the population of Mukono Town increase by several folds and this has also seen an increase in destitute families many of whom live in squalid conditions or ghetto conditions [in neighbourhoods such as Kikooza].

#### **3.3 Research design**

The research design involved the use of a case study. Thus, Mukono Town was considered to be a case study for a holistic analysis. The respondents presumed knowledgeable on the topic were selected using purposive sampling. This enabled the collection of only relevant and focused data. The data collected were qualitative and obtained through interviews and observations [for the primary data] and the review of literature [from journals, textbooks and official documents] for secondary data.

#### **3.4 Target population**

This consisted of politicians, government and NGO officials, academics, activists, educationists, mothers, teachers and opinion leaders from Kikooza neighbourhood in Mukono Town and presumed knowledgeable on domestic violence and academic achievement.

### **3.5 Sample framework and sample size**

A non-probability sampling technique involving purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The primary consideration of purposive sampling is on the researcher's judgment as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study (Kumar, 2011; Onen & Oso, 2008). Thus, the researcher only goes to those people who in his opinion are likely to have the required information and willing to share it with him (Kumar). Purposive sampling technique was used to identify those respondents with the relevant information with a view of generating focused information. After engaging 50 respondents in the study, the researcher assumed that no more new information was likely to emerge. As noted by Kumar, in qualitative research, when no more new information is emerging, it is assumed that one has reached the data saturation point and accordingly, the sample size is determined. Thus, the sample size was determined by the data saturation point instead of being fixed in advance.

### **3.6 Data collection**

#### **3.6.1 Primary data**

Primary data were collected using field observations and interviews.

##### **3.6.1.1 Interviews**

The researcher held face-to-face interviews with the respondents to get the views on domestic violence and academic performance in secondary schools in Mukono Town. The researcher formulated an interview questionnaire [questionnaire schedule] in which both structured and unstructured questions were used. With structured interviews a list of open-ended questions were asked to all respondents in the same manner [appendix A]. With unstructured interviews, the researcher asked questions according to the responses from the respondents. During the interviews, the researcher asked questions about the causes of domestic violence and effects of domestic violence on academic achievement. Fifty respondents who included politicians, government officials, NGOs, academics, educationists, mothers, teachers and opinion leaders were purposively selected for the interviews because of their presumed knowledge on the topic.

### **3.6.1.2 Observations**

The data that could not be captured through the interviews was gathered using disguised observations. Thus, a list of items to be observed was made. It consisted of formal and informal activities, social service facilities, poverty indicators and homesteads [appendix B] found in the study area. During observation, the researcher noted in his diary the relevant issues related to the objectives of the study.

### **3.6.2 Secondary data**

This was gathered after the review of journals, official records, government publications, reports and internet search.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

The data analysis proceeded by first editing the data to rid of it of inconsistencies. Themes for discussion related to the objectives of the study were then created. This was followed by the qualitative analysis of the data (i.e., the literal description, narration and content analysis of the emerging issues). Authentic conclusions were then drawn from the data.

### **3.8 Limitations of the study**

The study on domestic violence and academic performance in secondary schools could have covered the whole of Mukono Town. However, the case study design and purposive sampling technique relegated the study to a relatively smaller area of Kikooza neighbourhood sub-county. The qualitative nature of the study also made the interpretation of the findings highly subjective. The tools that were used in data collection (i.e., observations and interviews) also have their own shortcomings. Further, the study was conducted for a short period of time for only one month in March 2018 using a relatively small sample of 40 respondents. This limited the scope of the data collected. The methodological shortfalls could limit the generalization of the study and lower its validity and reliability.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study investigated academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono Town. This was after the realization that there was a strong relationship between domestic violence and academic achievement. The spillovers of domestic violence on education achievement cannot be underestimated. Domestic violence negatively affects the victims, their peers and the whole society. Exposure in primary school to a higher proportion of peers from families affected by domestic violence negatively affects their secondary school completion, college enrollment and degree attainment while reporting of domestic violence has a strong effect on peer academic achievement and violence that has not been reported has significant negative effects on peers. The data collected were qualitatively analysed by the literal description, narration and content analysis of the emerging issues. This was followed by the making of authentic conclusions. The analysis and interpretation of the data are presented under the following subsections that relate to the objectives of the study: domestic violence in Mukono Town; and domestic violence and academic achievement in Mukono Town.

#### **4.2 Domestic violence in Mukono Town**

The first objective of this study was to find out the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to give their views on what causes domestic violence Mukono Town. The data on this objective were analysed under the question: what causes domestic violence in Mukono Town? The results showed that domestic violence in Mukono Town was a result of a combination of factors that were cultural, socioeconomic and psychological.

The study revealed that poverty and economic deprivation of an individual [or family] played a role in the breeding of domestic violence – a point also asserted by Farmer (1979) and Madhurima, (1996). Most of the perpetrators of domestic violence were found to be mainly of low income and low paid jobs that also commanded little prestige. To compensate for the lack of economic resources and to maintain dominance, many household heads [predominantly men]

had resorted to domestic violence against their wives [and children]. This involved insults, beatings, verbal aggression, intimidation [by threatening divorce or physical harm], harassment, constant belittling, humiliation and refusing to talk.

The study revealed that domestic violence was in part due to the beliefs held by some men and women that permit and encourage the perpetuation of violence, a view also held by Madhurima, (1996). It was found out that it was abnormal for a woman to insult, beat, intimidate, threaten, harass, belittle, or humiliate her husband and not the other way round. This kind of sociological arrangement had been taken to the extreme by men abusing and leaving women and children to the receiving end. This was definitely eroding away the self-esteem of women and children.

The study revealed that domestic violence was a manifestation of the patriarchal organization of society [of the Baganda in particular and Uganda as a whole] where males dominate females and children, a point also noted by Denmark, Krauss, Halpem and Sechzer (2006) and Davies (1994). The complex set of values, traditions and beliefs [of the Baganda and other communities] were found to be sexist and relegated women to second class beings. This was causing gender inequality. This inequitable arrangement was one of the fundamental factors for domestic violence as male domination was found to influence all aspects of life [including women presupposed to be subordinate]. It was common for both men and women to say that beating women was justified.

The study revealed that domestic violence in Mukono Town was a psychosocial phenomenon. Social factors such as stress, alcoholism and quality of the relationship were contributing to domestic violence (e.g., there was a strong association between alcohol and out-of-control behavior by some men after drinking). Thus, alcohol and drug abuse were contributing to accelerated or increased aggression [domestic violence] in Mukono Town. This is similar to the findings of Farmer (1979) of the correlation between alcohol and domestic violence. Socially, it was found out that in marriages with no or little respect for one another, domestic violence was common since families lacked the skills to listen to one another and preferred the use violence to express their feelings. The study found out that domestic violence was in part initiated by jealousy, polygamy, infidelity and the power of the extended family over the married couple. A woman narrated how she was slapped by her jealousy husband and abused by her in-laws simply

because she was seen taking to another man. Her husband and in-laws suspected her of having an extra-marital affair.

The results also showed that domestic violence was common in families where husbands failed to fulfill their traditional economic obligations to their extended families. Women were found to be aggressive to their husbands who failed to look after them. They were verbally despising their husbands wondering what type of men they were and often denied them sex as a weapon. This again was found to be counterproductive as some men became aggressive [threatening violence, extra-marital sex, divorce and physical harm].

The study found out that domestic violence arises from a learned behavior, a point also noted by Farmer (1979). Several interviewees opined that children growing up watching regular examples of violence before them could learn this behavior. Thus, the level of family conflict has indirect lessons for children as they learn about the relationship between violence and love.

The study found out that domestic violence was in part due to frustrations [socially, sexually, financially and materially] often marked by sudden outbursts of anger, poor impulse control and poor self esteem – a point also noted by Coleman and Cressey (1987). For example, frustrated husbands were found to be violent, abusive, humiliating and belittling their wives and family members. This kind out of behavior was found to fade with reduced frustrations.

#### **4.3 Domestic violence and academic achievement in Mukono Town**

The second objective of this study was to examine how domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono Town. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to give their views on how domestic violence affects academic performance in Mukono Town. The data on this objective were analysed under the question: how does domestic violence affect academic achievement in Mukono Town? The results showed that domestic violence affects academic performance by negatively undermining the cognitive, behavioral, emotional and developmental domains of the learner.

The study revealed that domestic violence influences to a great extent the educational and co-curricular achievements of students. The findings tally with the works of Bhawna et al. (2015) on how domestic violence was influencing the child's emotional and social state. Some of the

teachers interviewed in the study acknowledged that students who reported to have violent homes were as well academically scoring below average compared to those who came from peaceful homes. Such students were not so much participating in social activities such as sports and debates and appeared depressed.

The study found out that students witnessing violence [sex, physical harm, insults, deprivation, etc.] in their homes were fond of aggression, constant fighting with peers and rebellion against school authority – a point also echoed by the National Center on Women and Family Law (1994) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts (1985). From the remarks made by teachers out of experience, such students were prone to early sex, delinquent behavior, substance abuse and runaways all of which were leading to their poor academic performance.

The study revealed that the domestic violence suppresses the academic achievement of the student in several ways. It was found out that some students stayed out of school to protect their mothers and vulnerable relatives from violent fathers or simply because their parents had refused to pay their school fees as a punishment. Such actions were impacting negatively on the social, emotional, behavioral adjustment, mental health and school performance - a point observed by Cunningham and Baker (2004); Koenen, et al. (2003); Evans, Davies and DiLillo (2008); and Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt and Kenny (2003). Students and teachers interviewed contend that domestic violence was in part contributing to performance in school [in both academics and extra-school activities].

The study revealed that the domestic violence (i.e., the hostility and aggression in the marital relationship) was resulting in the failure of the parents to meet the developmental needs of the children. The hostility and aggression in the marital relationship was carried over in the form of negative emotions and responses to children. This could be in form of insults, beatings, deprivation, belittling and humiliation. Such parental behaviors were found responsible for many of the negative outcomes observed in students such school absenteeism, rebellion against school authority and aggression against peers and teachers. The findings are similar to the observations made by Cummings and Davies (1994); Hughes (1997); and Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, and Zak (1985) about how inter-parent conflicts result in inconsistent and negative discipline in children.

The results revealed that the domestic violence harms family functioning, health and well-being of the family head and the quality of interaction of the family head with the children and rest of the family. These deficits in family functioning were found to impact negatively on the school performance of a child. Depression among students and parents victimized by domestic violence was widely spread basing on the interviews with parents, teachers and students. It was found out that depressed mothers experienced difficulty in being warm and consistent toward their children (e.g., they cared less whether their children attended school or not or had the requirements of the school and they were also less vocal, spontaneous and positive). These findings concur with the studies done by Weissman and Paykel (1974); Fisher, Kokes, Harder, and Jones (1980); and Smokowski and Wodarski (1996) about child performance and family malfunctioning as indicative of neglect on the part of depressed mothers.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research. The first section demonstrates the summary according to the objectives of the study; the second section is about the conclusions based on the summary. The third section gives recommendations drawn from the conclusions. The fourth section puts forward possible areas for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary

This study investigated academic achievement of secondary school students as a correlate to domestic violence in Mukono Town. This was after the realisation that there was a strong relationship between domestic violence and academic achievement. The spillovers of domestic violence on education achievement cannot be underestimated. Domestic violence negatively affects the victims, their peers and the whole society. Exposure in primary school to a higher proportion of peers from families affected by domestic violence negatively affects their secondary school completion, college enrollment and degree attainment while reporting of domestic violence has a strong effect on peer academic achievement and violence that has not been reported has significant negative effects on peers.

The study was qualitative and conducted using a case study design and purposive sampling technique. The data were collected using interviews and observations [for primary data] and documents analysis [for secondary data]. The objectives of the study were to find out the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town; and to examine how domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono Town.

The study found out that the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town were cultural, social, economic and psychological factors deeply rooted in society. The study also found out that domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono Town by negatively impacting on the physical, mental, emotional, social and economic strength of a student.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the summary of the findings, the following conclusions were made:

The first objective of this study was to find out the causes of domestic violence in Mukono Town. The study concludes by noting that domestic violence in Mukono Town will for the years to come persist not until the causes that are deeply rooted in the psyche of society are addressed.

The second objective of this study was to examine how domestic violence affects academic achievement in Mukono Town. The study concludes by noting that given the large positive correlation between domestic violence and academic performance, the achievement gap between peaceful and stable homes and malfunctioning families will persist.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

In view of the above conclusions, the researcher made the following recommendations:

First, the study recommends the need for strengthening of the family values, the screening for adverse childhood experiences, particularly domestic violence exposure, and devoting greater academic and social service resources to supporting these children may help them recover from the effects of violence exposure and set a more positive course in their future school achievement. In addition, further research may seek to explore more specifically the role of child protection or other service interventions in the outcomes for children exposed to domestic violence.

Secondly, the study recommends the need for every citizen to ensure that in their small way they work towards eliminating domestic violence since its spillovers impact on several aspect of life including academic achievement. Students who have been exposed to domestic violence need to be helped to go over the abuse and be empowered with safety plans to take when they next encounter similar situations. Those small efforts will add up to produce more friendly homes and hence the nation.

### **5.5 Recommended areas for further research**

More research should be done on the following:

1. Child neglect and academic success in Mukono Town.
2. Family values and school completion in Mukono Town.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE [QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE]**

1. What forms of domestic violence exist in Mukono Town?
2. What causes domestic violence in Mukono Town?
3. How does domestic violence impact on everyday life in Mukono Town?
4. Who are the most affected group of people [women, children or men]? Why?
5. How does domestic violence affect academic achievement in Mukono Town?
6. How can domestic violence be eliminated in Mukono Town?

## APPENDIX B

### OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

1. Formal and informal activities
2. Education facilities/schools
3. Poverty indicators
4. Homesteads
5. Conduct of students, parents and teachers