

Effects of Gender Based Violence Among Couples-Acase of Shapande Compound in Choma District”

Felix Chibesa

Catholic Medical Mission Board, plot 20, Msuzu Rd, Woodlands, Lusaka, Zambia

ABSTRACT: Zambia has recorded an increase in cases of Gender Based Violence in the recent past. In 2015, Zambia had 18,088 cases of Gender Based Violence per the 2015 Gender Crimes statistics in 2015. Consequently, a study was conducted on the effects of Gender Based Violence among couples, narrowed down to couples in Shampandecompound of Choma district. A cross sectional quantitative and explorative study design was employed. This study design combined quantitative and qualitative enquiries for purposes of both triangulation of the data collected and mutual complementation between the two methods regarding collection of information. The results indicated that Gender Based Violence among couples affected not only the individual victim but the couple as well. The study showed that 78% of the people that experienced violence felt dehumanized, 26% ended up divorced, 34.8% weren't communicating with their partners and 39.2% reported experiencing various emotions such as fear, anxiety, raised tempers, mental trauma, distrust and many more emotional difficulties. However, it's interesting to note that some of those that were abused found the practice normal. Others reported improvement in their marriages after being abused; while 22% of those physically abused felt they were to blame for the abuse and thus deserved it.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Gender Based Violence (GBV) can be referred to as a form of violence directed against or at another person on the basis of gender. It constitutes a breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, and dignity, equality between men and women, non-discrimination and physical and mental integrity (EU institute of gender equality, 2010). A recent global review of 50 population-based studies carried out in 36 countries indicates that between 10% and 60% of women who have ever been married or partnered have experienced at least one incident of physical violence from a current or former intimate partner (Heise.L.(1996) **Violence against women: global organizing for change.** In: Edleson JL, Eisikovits ZC, editors. Future interventions with battered women and their families.)

According to Chalk, (2002), in Africa, relationships with other people, self-esteem, physical activity, social development, and psychological functioning are impacted by gender based violence and neglect. Sexually abused females especially girls have been found to experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Findings from the WHO (2010) study presented by Mbwambo, show that up to 36 percent of women in Namibia, 56 percent in Tanzania and 71 percent in Ethiopia experience physical or sexual violence or both during their lifetimes at the hands of an intimate partner. Recent data from Rwanda's National Institute of Statistics indicate that 31% of women are subjected to domestic violence after age 15, generally by a husband or intimate partner. In 10.2 percent of cases, the violence occurs during pregnancy.

Andrew R. Morrison (November 2004) in his research paper entitled "The cost of Gender Based Violence in developing Countries", reports that, "In Zambia, almost 42% of women had experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner sometime in their lives. The 2006 and 2010 CSO studies on Gender Based Violence, points out that Gender Based Violence indicate that GBV is being practiced by both the males and females in intimate relationships in Zambia. While we have data on the prevalence of marital Gender Based violence through the Central Statistics Gender reports this study is focusing on the effects of Gender Based violence among couples.

Given the evidence of the presence of Gender Based Violence, a study was proposed to study its effects on couples in Shampande compound of Choma district. This study was unique in that it went beyond other GBV researches which focused solely on estimating the prevalence of violence against women and assessing women's and men's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, laws, policies and services addressing violence against women, to explore the effects of GBV among couples; targeting both males and females.

The focus of this study was to assess the effects of gender based violence on both males and females in couples in Shampande compound of Choma district. The broad objective of this study likewise, was to determine the effects of GBV amongst Shampande compound couples.

It attempted to add to the already existing body of knowledge on the prevalence of Gender based violence and its effects. The Zambia Central Statistics Office collects data on the prevalence of GBV and other variables related to Gender in the Gender Report. However, this study goes an extra mile in that it tries to explore the effects of Gender Based Violence among couples; focusing on both males and females.

As the study concluded, the findings of this study will be helpful to the social workers and other community workers as knowledge on the causes and effects of GBV among couples will help the social workers and community workers come up with interventions in Gender Based Violence prevention and awareness programs targeting the couples in the community.

The final study findings will be obliging to those organizations that are interested in community intervention on Gender based violence to design programs that will help the victims of Gender Based Violence among couples.

The study will also be important to the various scholars and program designers as well as implementers of Anti-GBV campaigns understanding the potential consequences of GBV which will help actors to develop appropriate strategies to respond to these GBV after effects and prevent further harm to the victims.

Scholars and researchers would also find the study useful as it adds to the body of knowledge in the need to further the research on the effects of GBV.

Further, it is a starting point for bigger studies across the country to study effects of Gender Based Violence in intimate relationships by scholars and other research agencies such as Central Statistical Office of Zambia.

The general objective of the study was to determine the effects of gender based violence amongst couples in Shampande Compound. And the research had three specific objectives:

- Determine the causes of gender based violence amongst couples in Shampande Compound.
- Identify the forms of gender based violence which are common among couples in Shampande Compound.
- Investigate the effect of gender based violence amongst the couples of Shampande Compound.

II. RESEARCH METHODS/PROCEDURE/APPROACH

Across sectional quantitative and explorative study design was employed. This study design combined both quantitative and qualitative enquiries for triangulation of the data collected and getting the information which one method could not collect without the other.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative was used to help us overcome deficiencies that one enquiry could have had and enable triangulation via mixed methods hence strengthening the findings. The quantitative method provided descriptive statistics that measured the number of couples affected by GBV while the qualitative method explored the actual effects of GBV.

The study was conducted in Shampande Compound which is one of the compounds in Choma district of Southern province in Zambia and is 290 km south of the capital city Lusaka and 190 km north of tourism capital Livingstone. The district covers an area of about 7,300 sq. km with a population density of 34 persons per Km sq. and lies about 1200 m above sea level. In Choma, there is a high concentration of the population along the line of rail where most of the economic activities take place of which Shampande compound is one of them.

This site was appropriate for this study as it forms the location occupied by many couples as well as its having concentrated population with couples from diverse cultural, social and economic status, this study site presented the ideal setting for this study.

The target population of this study was both the male and females who are married, have partners or were married and residents of Shampande Compound. The numbers of respondents were 50 individuals who fit in the inclusion criteria.

Simple convenient random sampling method was used to select those that had partners, were married or had been married and were staying in Shampande. Then stratified convenient random sampling was used to choose respondents among those randomly chosen into the strata of male and female participants and randomly sampled.

The research's main tool for data collection was the structured questionnaire which served as an interview guide. The structured questionnaire had both closed and open ended questions to provide the respondents with a possibility to express oneself freely without being restricted to proposed responses by the researcher. The underlying assumption was that respondents will be free to answer the questions in the questionnaire at own convenience and honesty.

The aim of this approach was to ensure that each interview is presented with the same questions and in the same order. This was to ensure that the answers would be reliably aggregated and that comparisons could be made with confidence between sample subgroups or between different survey periods.

The quantitative data was entered using Microsoft Excel and interpreted using statistics methods to bring out the statistical findings while the qualitative data was used to bring out the participants' thoughts and feelings. The emerging patterns of thought were identified and grouped in themes which described the thoughts and experiences of the participants.

III. RESULTS/FINDINGS

Demographic Data of the Participants

The participants of the research were 50.98% Male and 49.01 % Female. The age range of the participants was as follows. 16% were 15-25 years, 29% were 26-35 years, 31% were 36-45 years and 24% were 46 years and above. 90% of the participants were married, 4% were divorced and 6% were single but had partners. The participants had been in marriage for different number of years; 32% had been married for above 11 years, 52% 0-5 years in marriage and 16% 6-10 years. The respondents had the following number of children; 62% had 1-2 children, 28% had 3-5 children and 10% had 6-10 children.

The education levels of the participants were as follows; 12% were university graduates, 33.33% were college graduates, 52.94% were secondary school level and 1.93% had not been to school. This indicates that 98.27% of the participants had been to school and only 1.93% hadn't been.

Causes of Gender Based Violence Amongst Couples in Shampande Compound

The research established the following as causes of Gender Based Violence among couples. 42% was caused by drug abuse, 30% was caused by mistrust and lack of communication, 36% was caused by unfaithfulness, 4% was due to lack of strong penalties for GBV perpetrators, 8% was due to lack of education and 6% was caused by dependence on spouse.

Common Forms of GBV Among Couples in Shampande Compound

The research found that 46% of couples' experience physical violence in their marriage/relationships, and 65% of that experience violence and 47% of those end up with serious injuries. 43.7% of the couples who experienced physical violence sought medical attention.

68% of the couples experienced psychosocial abuse. 18% experienced humiliation in public or any other type of humiliation, 30% were prevented from visiting relatives or friends, 65% were not given food by spouses, 22% had their food refused by their spouses, 50% refused to talk to their spouses and 38% felt that they were being insulted.

The results indicated that some spouses had experienced multiple emotional treatments broken down as follows; 18% were humiliated in public or received any other type of humiliation, 30% were prevented from visiting relatives or friends, 65% were not given food by their spouses, 22% refused food from their spouses, 50% refused to talk to their spouses and 38% felt insulted in ways.

The respondents said they had at some point or the other experienced psychosocial GBV in the last six months; some had experienced it as often as five times in the last six months.

From the perspective of economic violence; 22% of the couples experienced economic violence of which 12% were refused from getting employed and 10% were refused to do business.

26% of the respondents indicated that they had experienced sexual violence in one way or another. Then the 74% indicated no or declined to respond to the question and any further questions. 26% of those who responded indicated their partners having sex with them even when they knew that they had an STI, resulting in them being infected. The study also found that the proportion of females who had experienced physical violence in the 12 months prior to the research was 33% compared to men at 13%.

Effects of GBV among Couples

Gender base violence at an individual level, at large seriously affects all aspects of health- physical, sexual and reproductive, mental and behavioral health. During this research the results showed that all types of Gender Based Violence among Couples have effects on the individual as well as affects the relationship of the couples.

78% of the people that experience physical violence feel dehumanized and they become affected by the experiences in various ways. The effects of physical violence are of various ranges; 26% leads to divorce, 34.80% lead to no communication in the home. Couples stop talking to each other for a long time which leads to increased misunderstanding and increased misunderstanding leads to increased violence in a home. 39.2% report experiencing various emotions such as fear, anxiety, raised tempers, trauma in the mind, lack of trust and many more emotional problems.

“When I was beaten I felt that my partner does not love me and decided to divorce him. How can I stay with a man who beats me, I will not be free. From that day I never trusted him each time I was thinking he can come and kill me” respondent responding to how they reacted to Physical violence.

While 22% of those physically abused do not feel anything because they begin to blame themselves for the treatment. They say they deserve it because they feel they contributed to the being beaten.

Psychosocial abuse effects of GBV among couples do not seem to be different from the physical abuse in triggering the emotional and psychological pain. 74% make those who experience it to feel bad and dehumanized. It affects those affected in many ways, some of which include; having reduced self-esteem, anxiety, fear of the unknown since usually you are not sure of what your friend is thinking more in silent treatment. They feel depressed and lost; these result in some of those that experience this abuse giving up on their goals and their hope to live a better life.

“I felt like my partner does not love me. I felt less human I cannot really describe how I felt but less human of course which was depressing” respondent responding to how they felt when their partner humiliated them in public

The effects of economic Gender Based Violence have been that it creates dependence on the spouse who tends to only wait for their spouse to give them what they need; it perpetuates dependence, while to others it leads to divorce. For example, out of the 11 participants who indicated having experienced economic violence, 3 of them had their marriages ending in divorce.

The sexual violence resulted in the partners being infected with Sexually Transmitted Infections(STI's) as 26% of the participants who indicated having experienced sexual abuse from their partners indicated their partners having sex with them even when they knew that they had an STI.

This research was not without its curious findings. One curious finding in this research was that some of those who were abused found it normal to be abused. 26% of those that were physically abused felt that it was normal to be treated in that way because they had become used to such treatment and traditions had taught them that it's normal in a marriage to have conflicts. Others reported that after the psychosocial treatment their marriages had become better and their conflicts ended. They attributed the resolution of the problems they had in marriage before to the abuse they had experienced and they thought that at times Gender Based Violence in marriage is better.

From the perspective of Economic Violence, others said that Gender Based Violence had reduced their burden. They were happy that they were refused to work because they could now go to school, college and study without being stressed. The above response was given in response to the question describe how being refused work or doing business affected you?

“It has not affected me in any way because he provides everything for me and the Children” Respondent

“I have not felt anything its normal in our culture for a woman to just be at home without working” respondent

“Being refused to work or starting business by my husband has helped me to have time to go to school and also study”

Even with the curious finding of the perceived benefit of Gender Based violence among couples, the participants indicated that the effects of GBV are far more harmful than the benefits of it in most cases.

IV. DISCUSSION

The general objective of the research was to determine the effects of gender based violence amongst couples of Shampande compound. This research was also showing its prevalence through statistics and raised vital awareness about several important issues: the scope of the problem; what causes the problem, and how it affects the couples.

The causes of gender based violence amongst couples in Shapande compound

It's undeniable from the findings of this research that Gender Based Violence exists among the couples. The causes of GBV range from those that are behavioral on the part of the abusers such as lack of strong policies and punishment for the perpetrators to lack of communication among couples. Other contributing factors included lack of education and dependence on spouse by the abused.

Common forms of GBV among couples in Shampande compound

This research found that couples in the research area sampled experienced various forms of Gender Based Violence, one of them being physical violence in their marriages/relationships. The levels of physical violence are as high 46% which is higher than the national levels according to the Central Statistics Office which places physical violence at 16% among intimate partners in Zambia. However, the result is likely to be more consistent with the Central Statistics findings on the provincial statistics Gender report of 2010 which indicated that 25% of the females in Southern province experienced physical violence in 2001/2002 and in 2007, 31% of women in Southern province reported having experienced physical violence in the last 12 months

before the survey. This translated to a 6 percent change point. (p25). Shampande is one of the most populated compounds in Choma district of Southern Province and it has been recording an increase in Gender Based Violence cases. It's clear from the results that Shampande is not exempt from intimate partners experiencing Gender Based Violence. There is abundant evidence that GBV is endemic to Shampande community affecting people of every class, race, age, religion, and education levels, although to varying degrees and in different ways.

The endemic presence of physical Gender Based Violence in Zambia is confirmed by various studies conducted by various researchers such as Andrew R who in his research paper entitled 'The cost of Gender Based Violence in developing Countries' reports that, "In Zambia, almost 42% of women had experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner sometime in their lives."

The research established that the highest form of Gender Based Violence experienced among couples was psychosocial violence which was at 68% among Shampande compound couples. Psychosocial violence mostly goes unnoticed by outsiders which may imply that there are more victims of Gender based violence than can be noticed. Most partners among couples experience multiple forms of Gender based violence which has more harmful effects both on the individuals and the way they may react to marital problems when compounded.

Effects of GBV among Couples

Gender base violence at an individual level, seriously affects all aspects of health- physical, sexual and reproductive, mental and behavioral health. During this research, the results showed that all types of Gender Based Violence among couples not only affect the individual but the relationship of the couples as well.

Physical violence and psychosocial violence leads to victims feeling dehumanized, reduced self-esteem, fear, anxiety lack of communications among couples, raised tempers, misunderstandings, mental trauma, lack of trust and divorce. As the result of feeling dehumanized, most victims of Gender Based Violence give up on their goals. This could be the reason why success among victims of Gender based violence couples is not attainable. Psychosocial violence mostly goes unnoticed by outsiders of the victims which may imply that there are likely to be more cases of Gender based violence. .

The effects of economic Gender Based Violence has been the creation of individuals dependence on their spouses and a tendency to wait for their spouse to give them what they need, it perpetuates dependence. Economic violence is also evident among couples with 22% of the couples experiencing the economic violence. Like Glen, Melis and Wither (2009) all forms of GBV affect the world of work both reflect and reinforce social, economic, and political gender inequalities, with unequal outcomes in labor markets and for national economies. According to an ILO (2011) report, "Gender-based violence not only cause pain and suffering but it also devastates families, undermines workplace productivity, diminishes national competitiveness, and stalls development."

One would not agree more with the findings of ILO because In addition to pain and suffering caused by Gender Based violence, direct financial costs includes those resulting from victims' absenteeism and turnover, illness and accidents, disability or even death. Indirect costs include the victims' decreased functionality and performance, quality of work, and timely production.

Sexual Gender Based violence is also endemic among couples and communities. This research found a relationship between sexual violence and the increase in STI among couples as 26% of them responded having had experienced sexual violence. They reported their partners having sex with them even when their partner knew they had an STI and it resulted in them being infected.

This research was not without its interesting findings. The interesting finding in this research was that some of those who were abused found it normal to be abused and they experienced no negative emotional effect at all. This could be that the victims are socialized into the gender roles of their specific cultures; women and girls often hold beliefs that support their oppression through GBV. According to CIET (2007) approximately 40% of women across the 10 countries studied said they would have sex if their partner refused to use a condom, and a similar proportion did not think women have the right to refuse sex with their partner. This kind of responses from women show strong socialization which makes victims of various Gender Based Violence issues feel they have no right.

Study Limitations

Although the research reached its aim, there were some unavoidable limitations during the research such as: Firstly, because of the time limit, this research was conducted using a small sample size of 50 participants from the population of Choma and Shampande Compound. Therefore, to generalize the results for larger groups, the research should have involved more participants in the study so as to find significant relationship from the data on the effects of GBV among couples

The other limitation was that the research was dependent on the self-reported data, which is limited by the fact that it can rarely be independently verified. In other words, it took what people would say at face value. Given the nature of the study, it may have biases such as (1) selective memory (remembering or not remembering experiences or events that occurred at some point in the past); (2) telescoping [recalling events that occurred at one time as if they occurred at another time]; (3) attribution [the act of attributing positive events and outcomes to one's own agency but attributing negative events and outcomes to external forces]; and, (4) exaggeration [the act of representing outcomes or embellishing events as more significant than is actually suggested from other data].

Because of the nature of the study there, is a possibility cultural limitation. The study needed to collect information on issues to deal with sexual abuse which is associated with shame. It's most likely that the participants did not disclose as much information on matters associated with shame such as disclosing what happens in a home and sexual issues.

V. CONCLUSION/IMPLICATIONS

In general, we find that all forms of Gender based violence are experienced among couples by both males and females. The research establishes that the highest form of Gender based violence experienced among couples is psychosocial violence which was at 68% among Shampande compound couples. Most partners among couples experience multiple forms of Gender based violence which has more harmful effects both on the individuals and the way they may react to marital problems when compounded.

The study finds strong evidence that SGBV may lead to increased STI infection among couples. The sexual violence results in the partners being infected with sexually transmitted infections. If SGBV is not curbed there is a possibility of having increased HIV infection among couples than any other population. Hence SGBV may need to be part of all interventions aimed at HIV Prevention.

The study also finds impact of Gender based violence at an individual level, at large seriously affects all aspects of health- physical, sexual, mental and behavioral health as well as affects the relationship of the couples. The effects range from victims feeling dehumanized; divorce, couples stopping talking to each other for a long time which leads to increased misunderstanding and increased misunderstanding leads to increased violence in a home. Other effects include reduced self-esteem, anxiety, fear of the unknown, raised tempers, trauma in the mind, lack of trust and many more emotional problems. Other victims of Gender Based violence become more dependent on the perpetrator of GBV economically. As a result, the more couples are experiencing GBV in a nation the higher the impact on the production of the economy. Production is also likely to be affected by the number of hours that victims spend on nursing their injuries and other emotional pain they may go through as well as the resources spent on nursing the injuries.

Recommendations

- ✓ Given that GBV is caused by complex and inter-related factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels, governments' efforts to eliminate GBV must be coordinated, multi-sectorial responses.
- ✓ Government's efforts and those of its partners in development of meaningful and promising strategies to eliminate GBV should be informed by systematic data on prevalence of GBV in targeted audiences, and its effects.
- ✓ Whether working to reduce GBV in communities or the nation, there is need for Government to have an increased emphasis on stopping GBV from occurring in the first place - primary prevention should be the focus.
- ✓ Legislation and policies must be developed and enforced to protect survivors of GBV, address gender discrimination, promote gender equity, and discourage violence

Future Research questions

- ✓ What could be the underlying factors which make 26% of those abused to feel it's normal to be abused by a spouse in any way?
- ✓ Interventions which target couples must also target the friends of the couples where the couples share the domestic violence they experience.

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Tables and Figures

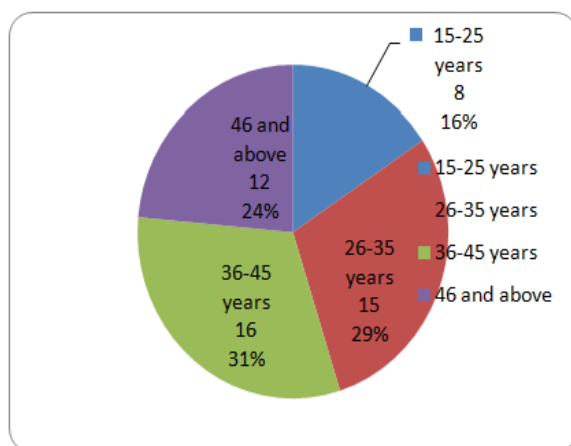


Figure 1 Age ranges of respondents

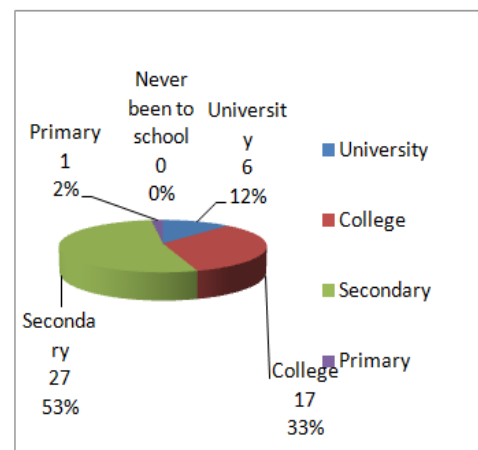


Figure 2 education levels of respondents

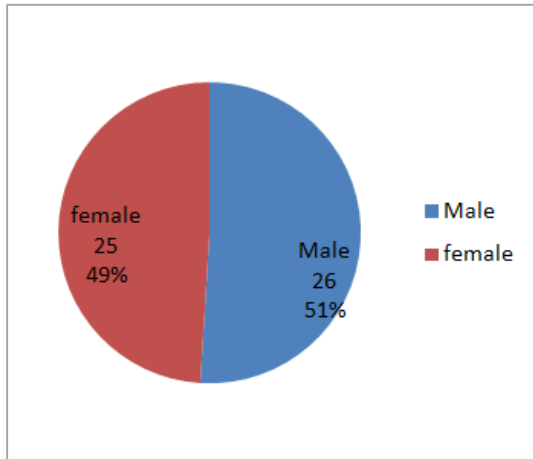


Figure 3 Gender of participants

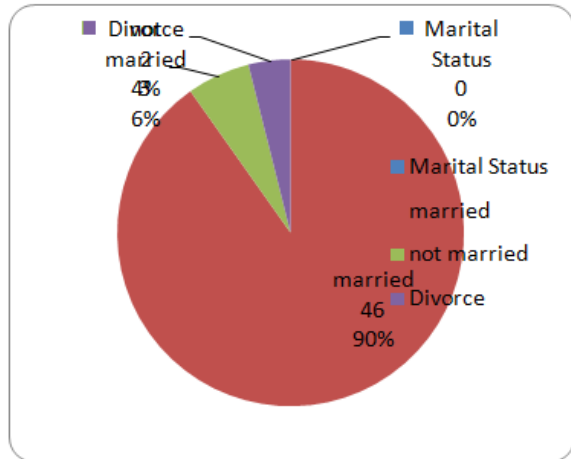


Figure 4 Marital status of respondents

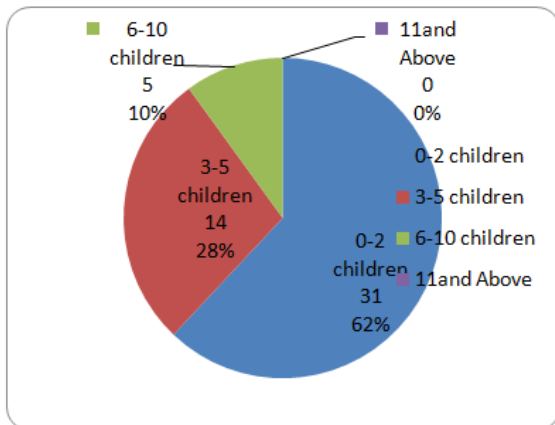


Figure 5 Number of children in marriage

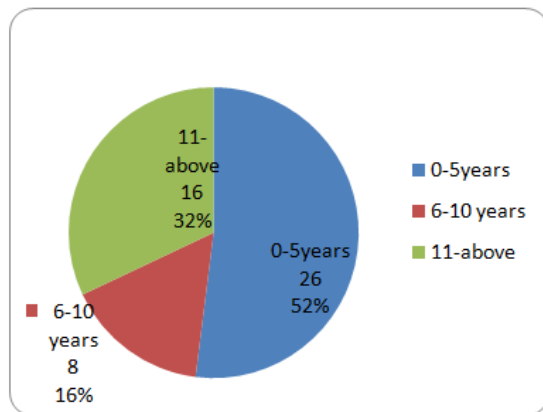


Figure 6 Number of years in marriage

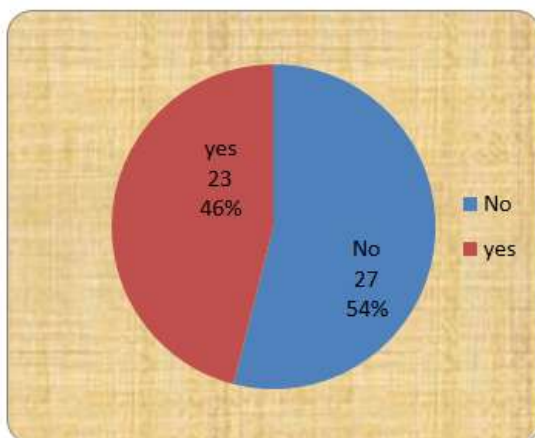


Figure 7 Number of responded ever hurt physically

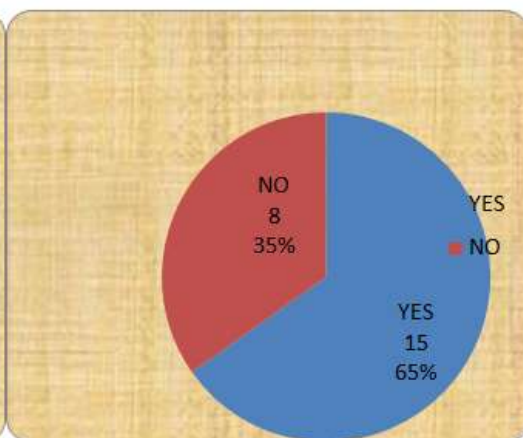


Figure 8 # of those physically hurt who get injuries

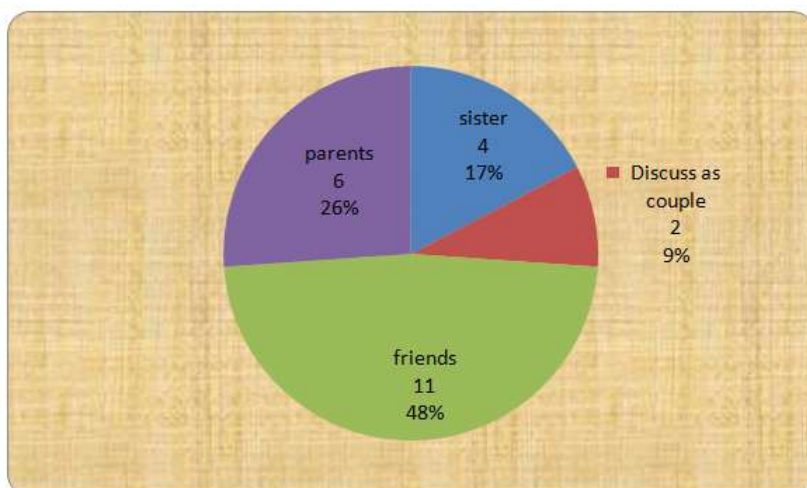


Figure 9 who couples report GBV cases to

Figure 10: General Responses on Gender Based Violence

Causes of Gender Based Violence	Number of respondents out of 50	Percentage %
dishonesties	1	2
Drug Abuse	21	42
Mistrust and miscommunication	15	30
Unfaithfulness	17	34
Dependence on spouses	3	6
Lack of education	4	8
Lack of strong penalties for perpetrators or abusers	2	4

Figure 11: General effects of Gender Based Violence in General.

Effect of GBV	Number of respondents out of 50	Percentage %
Divorce	39	78
Children suffering	8	16
Leads to an faithfulness	1	2
Loss of self esteem	2	4
Death	11	22
Hatred /fighting	2	4
Lead to alcohol abuse	2	4