
**Gender-Based Violence And Its Impact On Women. A Case Study Of Iganga Town Council Sub-County,
Iganga District**

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Abstract

This study investigates the profound impact of gender-based violence on women in Iganga Town Council Sub County Iganga District. The purpose of the study was to critically examine and understand prevalence, forms and consequences of gender_based violence of Iganga Town Council Sub County Iganga District. This study was guided by three major objectives and the research objectives were to find out the types and forms of gender_based violence, the causes of gender_based violence, and the impact of gender_based violence on women in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga District. The literature reviewed indicated that number of cross-cultural studies of women abuse have found that most gender_based violence involves male anger directed against their women partners. This gender difference appears to be rooted in the way boys and men are socialized—biological factors do not seem to account for the dramatic differences in behavior in this regard between men and women. The study employed qualitative and quantitative approach, which used both cross sectional survey and descriptive research design for collection and analysis of data. It allowed the researcher to understand how participants understand, interpret and experience a particular phenomenon by focusing on the participants' views and perspectives of their everyday experiences. The findings show that looking at the prevalence of and reasons for gender_based violence among women from low socioeconomic communities of Iganga, cross-sectional study were conducted to estimate the prevalence of gender_based violence and identify the reasons for it among 50 respondents aged 15-45 years in low socioeconomic areas in Iganga Town Council Sub County. Low educational status was the commonest reason for gender_based violence followed socio-economic inequalities and cultural values and beliefs. There is a need to address this problem with efforts from community workers, policy-makers, nongovernmental organizations and others.

Keywords: Gender-Based Violence, community And Women

Background of the study.

GBV is a complex problem that is deeply rooted in social norms and power dynamics (Ntirandekura, 2022). While it is difficult to attribute GBV to specific figures, there are individuals and movements that have played a significant role in creating awareness and combating it. For example, feminist activists such as; Gloria Steinem is a prominent feminist activist and journalist who has spoken out against various forms of GBV including domestic violence, sexual assault and workplace harassment. She emphasized the importance of intersectionality in understanding and addressing these issues (1970s) (Musaibah et al., 2023). Audre Lorde (1980s) highlighted the experiences of marginalized communities in relation to GBV and emphasized the need for self-care, self-expression and solidarity in the fight against violence against women (Ntirandekura, 2022). For Bell Hooks elaborated extensively on the connections between gender, race, and class in relation to violence against women and critiqued patriarchal systems and called for transformative justice and feminist education in the late 20th century and is still influential today.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a violation of human rights, a challenge to public health and an obstacle to civic, social, political and economic participation. It undermines not only the safety, dignity, overall health and human rights of the millions of individuals who experience it, but also the public health, economic stability and security of nations. Gender-based violence cuts across ethnicity, race, class, religion, educational level and international boundaries. It is estimated that one in three women worldwide has been beaten, forced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Although statistics on the prevalence of violence vary, the scope is vast, the scope is vast, and the consequences for individuals, families, communities, and countries are devastating (Christopher et al., 2022).

It is vital to promote the rights of all individuals and to reduce gender-based violence while mitigating its harmful effects on individuals and communities. If women, girls, men and boys do not fully enjoy their human rights and are not exposed to violence, progress towards development will fail. Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread human rights violations in the world. It knows no social, economic or national boundaries (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). In Africa, gender-based violence undermines the health, dignity, safety and autonomy of its victims, yet remains cloaked in a culture of silence. Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death. UNFPA is one of the leading UN agencies working to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and to address the physical and emotional consequences of gender-based violence. UNFPA programs offer psychosocial assistance, medical treatment and packages to rape survivors and support the right of all women and girls to live free from violence and abuse (Mercy et al., 2023).

GBV is widespread in Uganda and affects all people regardless of their social, economic and political status. It occurs in families, communities, workplaces and institutions. For example, the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) 2011 reports that 56% of women aged 15 to 49 in Uganda have experienced physical violence at some point in their lives, 28% of women in the same age group have experienced sexual violence. compared to 9% of men. GBV is critical, has devastating effects and high prevalence of social problems such as social exclusion, psychological distress, mental and anxiety disorders, spread of HIV and STD infections, unwanted pregnancies and trauma experienced by victims, has a direct negative impact on the dignity of victims and productivity in general (Mercy et al., 2023). GBV violates a number of women's rights, including the right to life, the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to equal protection under the law, the right to equality in the family, the right to equality in the family, the rights of women and men, the right to life, right to life, right to life, right to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. or the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (Annet et al., 2023). GBV is a structural problem that is deeply rooted in unequal power relations between men and women. Such violence is perpetuated by harmful social and cultural expectations about gender roles that are usually associated with being a woman or a man, a girl or a boy. It functions as a mechanism to enforce and maintain gender inequality. Women and girls who experience violence are given the message that they are worth less than others and that they have no control over their own lives and bodies. This has direct consequences for their health, employment and participation in social and political life.

Problem Statement

In the words of then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: “Violence against women continues to be one of the most heinous, systematic and widespread human rights violations in the world. It is a threat to all women and an obstacle to all our efforts for development, peace and gender equality in all societies (Flavia et al., 2023). In fact, violence kills more women between the ages of 15 and 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined. In 24 developing countries surveyed in a recent survey, combined, only 7% of victims of gender-based violence, including physical and sexual acts, formally reported their assaults to the police, medical or social services (Emmanuel et al., 2023). In Iganga Town Council, Iganga District, the situation is no different and this has thwarted the efforts of women to engage in activities that bring development to their households and community. Therefore, the researcher was interested in the effects of gender-based violence on women in Iganga Town Council, Iganga District.

Specific Objectives

1. To find out the types and forms of gender_based violence prevalent in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga district
2. To establish the causes of gender_based violence in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga district
3. To find out the possible solutions of gender_based violence on women in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga district

Methodology

A qualitative research design was used, which was descriptive and explanatory in nature. The aim of this proposal was to ensure that the required data were collected objectively, accurately and economically to produce credible and reliable findings that led to further action. The target population of this study was 100 respondents who consisted of family members and houses from Iganga Town Council Sub County. This was because such a population could offer credible information/opinions regarding the high impact of gender-based violence in Iganga District. The researcher interviewed about 80 respondents, 20 of whom were district officials, 10 from various women's NGOs who tend to have reliable information on the research topic, and 50 community members. The researcher used both primary and secondary methods. The researcher administered questionnaires to a selected number of respondents and used e-mails and mobile phones, especially in cases where it was difficult to conduct interviews. This helped the researcher to get as much information as possible. These included survey questionnaires and interview guides. Custom questionnaires and interview guides for the respondents that were used and distributed among them to get their opinion on the topic. Qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and interviews were coded and tabulated on a scale and then calculated using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) (Nelson et al., 2022). Data were analyzed qualitatively. This is because the study was fundamentally qualitative and aimed to explore the relationship between the causes of GBV and the effects of GBV on women's performance, the data were analyzed sequentially using thematic qualitative analysis, which is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data (Nelson et al., 2023). This method was used to be able to describe in detail the views and opinions of the respondents. Themes were defined and data were presented according to the identified themes, which were based on the objectives of the study. In the case of interviews, quotations were used to express the respondents' voices. In the case of questionnaires, tables were used to reduce findings or collected data into tabular form.

Results

Table 1: Response of the respondents on whether Gender_based Violence affects Women in Iganga Town Council Sub County.

Response Mode	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Disagree	03	14.1
Agree	75	84.6
Strongly Agree	02	1.3

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Total	80	100
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Source: Primary Data 2024

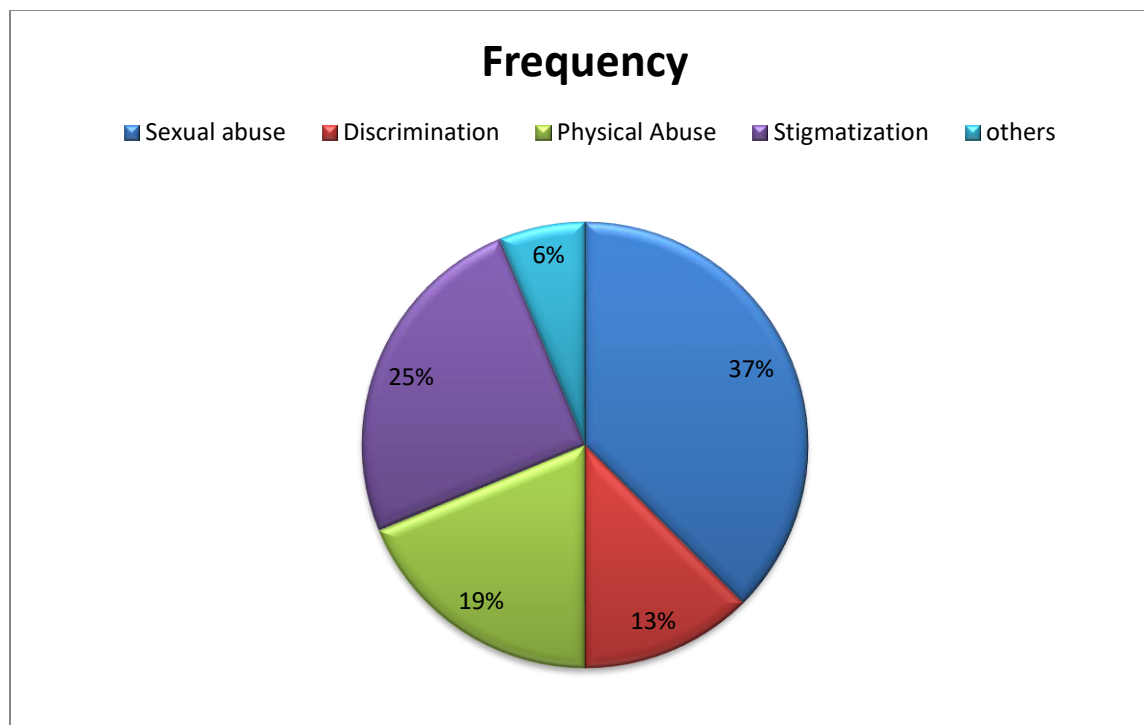
Table 1 presents study results that indicate that 03 (14.1%) of the respondents disagree, 75 (84.6%) agreed and 02 (1.3%) strongly agreed when asked whether GBV affects women in Iganga Town Council Sub County. The fact that the majority of the responses answered in agreement indicates that GBV has very big impact on women in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga District.

Table 2: showing the response modes on the different forms and types of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub County:

Forms and types of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sexual abuse	30	37.5
Discrimination	10	12.5
Physical abuse	15	18.75
Stigmatization	20	25
Others	05	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

Figure 1: showing the types and forms of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub County:



Source: Primary Data 2024

In the above table and line graph sexual violence 30 (37.5%) (Including rape, sexual assault and harassment in all public and private spheres of life) topped the list of type of GBV which was strongly agreed and agreed upon by most respondents who answered the questionnaire and were interviewed. Still from the table 5 it's evident that stigmatization came second with 20(25%), physical abuse scored 15 (18.75%) which meant that it came third in the respondents view and opinion comprise of violence in close relationships, trafficking in human beings, slavery, and sexual exploitation as seen in most Kampala streets and other streets in major towns in Uganda, harmful practices such as child and forced marriages (Vincent & Peter, 2023), female genital mutilation, Discrimination was yet another type which was put on test before respondents and scored 10 (12.5%). Also to note is the question of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator of acts of violence against women is also of great relevance. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is one of the most widespread forms of direct violence against women, and includes a range of sexual, psychological and physical coercive acts used against adult and adolescent women by a current or former intimate partner. Others types got 05 (6.25%) such as economic violence involves denying access of the victim to financial resources, property, healthcare, education, or the labour market, and denying them participation in economic decision-making. Emerging forms of violations, such as online harassment, various forms of sexual abuse instigated or facilitated through the use of information and communication technologies, stalking, and bullying. In line with the above observations the researcher and the study do affirm such views and opinions and therefore concludes that such gender_based violence cases do occur in Iganga Town Council Sub County.

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The causes of Gender_based Violence in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga District.

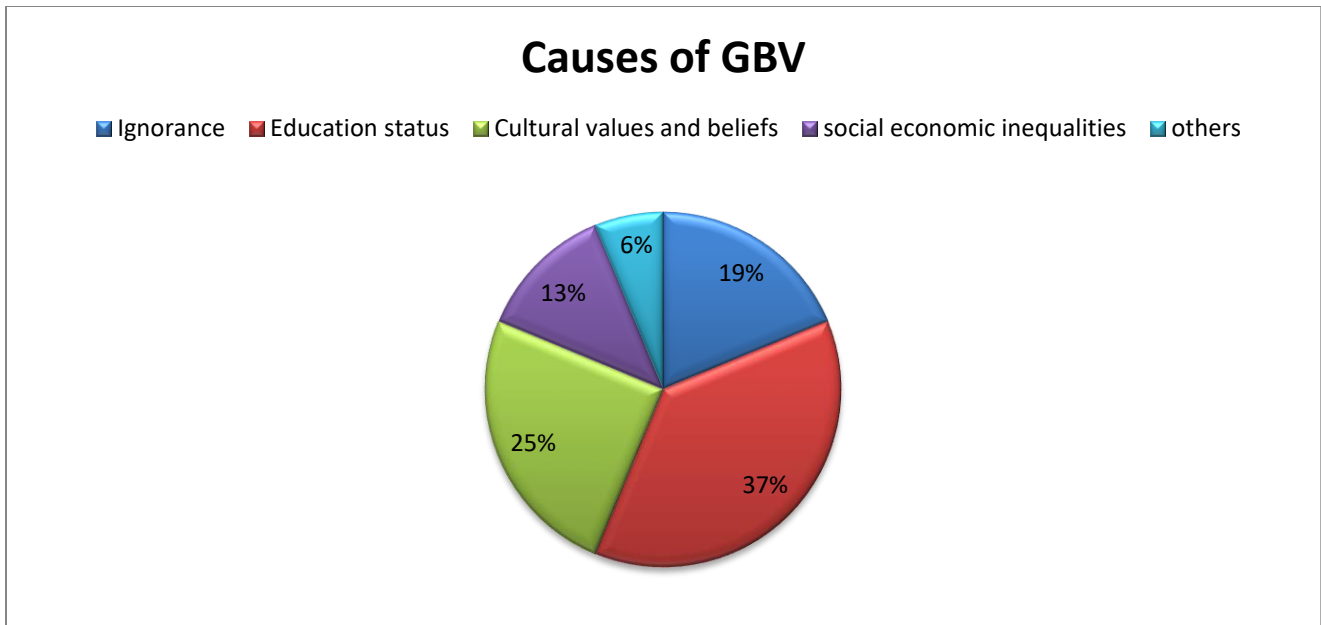
The study found out numerous forms and types of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub County which include; Ignorance, Education status, cultural values and beliefs, socio- economic inequalities and others.

Table 3: showing the causes of Gender_based Violence in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga Town

Causes of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Ignorance	15	18.75
Education Status	30	37.5
Cultural values and beliefs	20	25
Socio- economic inequalities	10	12.5
Others	5	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

Figure 2: showing causes of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub County:



Source: Primary Data 2024

Findings in the table 3 and pie chart above indicate that majority’ of the respondents agreed with the statement that educational status was major cause of GBV with 30(37.5%). Followed by respondents who attributed it to cultural values and beliefs 20 (25%), therefore this study wants to associate itself with the views of Heise 1998, therefore ignorance followed with 15 (18.75%), Socio-economic status 10 (12.5%) and others scored 05 (6.25%) respectively. The study found women living in poverty to be disproportionately affected; however, it has not been clearly established whether it is poverty as such that increases the risk of violence or rather other factors accompanying poverty. Rather, poverty can be seen as a “marker” for a variety of social conditions that combine to increase the risk faced by women (Shamim et al., 2023). For instance, rural women living in poverty who work in the fields or collect firewood alone may be at a higher risk of rape. Poverty may also put women under pressure to find or maintain jobs and in turn render them vulnerable to sexual coercion, or push them in to occupations that carry a high risk of sexual violence, such as sex work. It is widely understood that GBV-be it in the form of isolated acts or systematic patterns of violence-is not caused by any single factor. Rather, it is a combination of several factors that increase the risk of man committing violence and the risk of a woman experiencing violence.

The effects of Gender_based Violence in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga District.

Table 4: Showing the effects of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub County

Effects of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)

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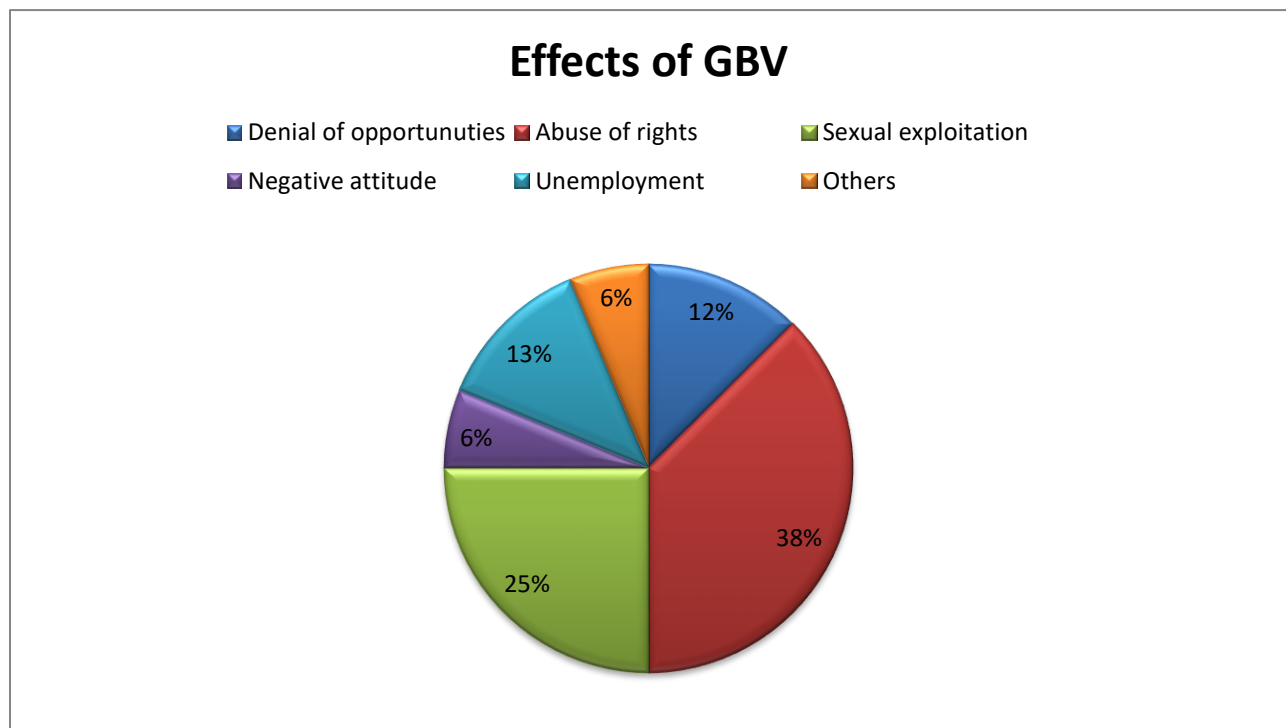
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Denial of opportunities	10	12.5
Abuse of rights	30	37.5
Sexual exploitation	20	25
Negative attitude	05	6.25
Unemployment	10	12.5
Others	05	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

Figure 3: showing the effects of GBV in Iganga Town Council Sub Council:



Source: Primary Data 2024

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The study notes that abuse of rights 30 (37.5%) is one of the effects that can leave profound mental scars, damage the wellbeing of women and girls in common, including their reproductive and sexual health, and in some instances, results in death, sexual exploitation 20(25%), the respondents strongly agreed that women are exposed into sex, or maltreated in some other approach-most frequently by someone she knows, including her spouse or another male relatives, Violence against women mutually violates and impairs or nullifies the gratification by women of their human rights and elementary freedoms (Faridah et al., 2023). In all societies, to a superior or minor extent, women and girls are subjected to corporal, sexual and mental violence that cuts across ranks of earnings, class and customs. This is a subject which endangers women's lives, bodies, mental uprightness and autonomy. In the above table 7 (12.5%) have been denied opportunities and is a demonstration of historically uneven supremacy dealings between men and women, Also negative attitude achieved 05 (6.25%); Violence may have reflective effects, both direct and indirect, on a woman's reproductive health, including: unnecessary pregnancies and limited admittance to family planning information and contraceptives, treacherous abortion or injuries unremitting throughout a lawful abortion subsequent to an unwanted pregnancy, complications from recurrent, high-risk pregnancies and lack of follow-up care, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. This vicious cycle of development, identity and gender-based violence in fact explains the empirical evidence of the association between gender_based violence and poverty, the individual risk factors of alcohol and substance abuse, male unemployment, male educational status and childhood experience of violence. Poverty, lack of education and lack of healthcare increases both vulnerability and the likelihood of exposure to gender_based violence. There has also been the prevalence of the sex trade among women as a means of earning income which ultimately has unbearable the consequences on its workers and on women in general. The objectification of women is also a pressing issue that cannot be ignored. This was represented by 10(12.5%) of the respondents who face unemployment and characterized by many factors which have led to so many problems women experience in Iganga Town Council sub county. Others were represented by 05(6.25%).

The prevention towards gender-based violence in Iganga Town Council Sub County.

To identify prevention measures towards Gender-Based Violence respondents were asked what the measures towards Gender-Based Violence were and the results were put in a table below;

Table 5: showing prevention measures towards GBV in Iganga Town Council

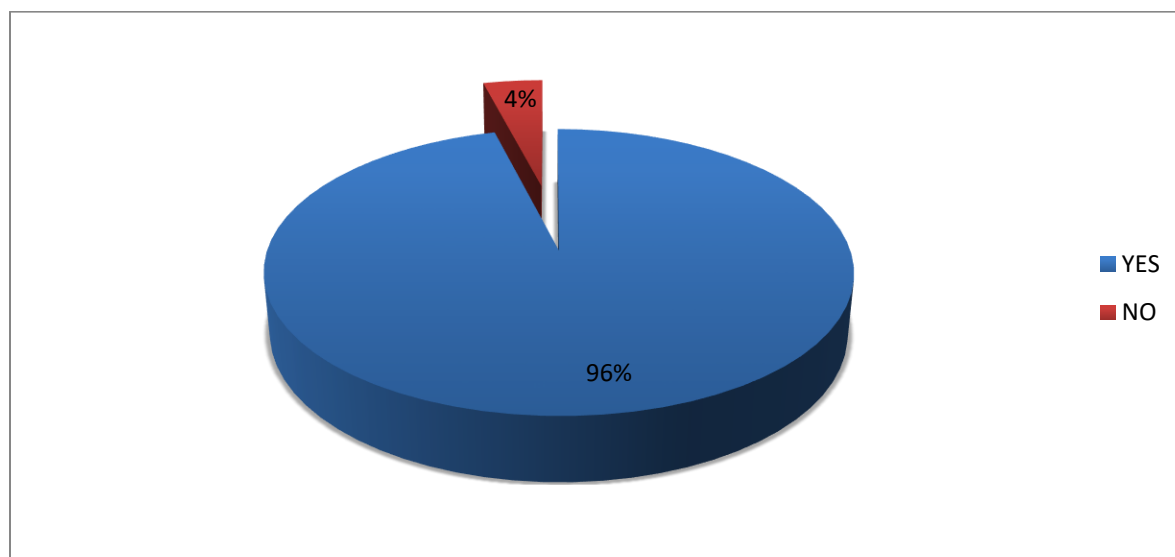
Prevention measures of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education and Awareness	20	25
Empowering women	30	37.5

Support Services	10	12.5
Engaging boys and men	15	18.75
Bystander intervention	05	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Primary Data 2024

Table 8 presents study results that indicate 20(25%) of respondents agreed to education and empowerment, Empowering women being the leading preventive measure with 30(37.5%), 10(12.5%) agreed on support services, 15(18.75%) agreed on engaging boys and men, and finally 5(6.25%) agreed on Bystander intervention.

Figure 4: showing the correlation between Gender_based Violence and women in Iganga Town Council Sub County in Iganga District.



Source: Primary Data 2024

From the pie chart above, the findings show that 96% Of the respondents agreed that Gender_based Violence is a very huge obstacle to women in Iganga Town Council Sub County. While 4% of respondents were not sure whether GBV can be a hindrance to women.

Conclusions

Drawing from the findings basically, gender_based violence limits women as human beings, drains their energy and hope, and constricts the possibilities of creating a new vision of society. Since it includes threats of violence,

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coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private, Violence against women is a violation of 47 women's human rights, a cause and consequence of gender inequality, and a major cause of women's ill health. It is a detriment to their well-being, very often a crime, and a significant cost to the resources of the wider society.

As a consequence, there are policy issues across the whole range of subjects that concern governments. These issues are particularly important in the area of crime, health, family, education and economic well-being.

Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations:

- i. Transforming attitudes and beliefs in different societies that condone such violence, for supporting individual survivors, and to ensure that governments and NGOs fulfill their duty to protect woman.
- ii. Pressure must be maintained on national governments to prioritize the coordination of programs and policies across sectors such as health, justice, social welfare and education to ensure that the composite needs of survivors of violence are addressed. Of equal importance is scaling up responses that work media campaigns, hotlines, and one-stop crisis centers and so on.

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