

## Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence among women in Arumeru District



Rehema J. Magesa

Tengeru Institute of Community Development, P.O Box 1006, Arusha, Tanzania

**ABSTRACT:** Intimate partner violence has been prevalent worldwide. The extent of violence results in a number of physical, emotional effects and even death. In Tanzania the problem has been persistent for with grave consequences. It is with this concern that this study embarked on a research journey in order to assess the type of violence intimate partners experience and establish the determinants of Intimate Partner Violence in Arusha Region. The study adopted a Probability sampling technique where a total of 300 aged 15 to 60 were sampled for the study from Sing'isi and Akheri ward in Arumeru District. The study adapted the Validated Arabic Version of the NorVold Abuse Questionnaire (NORAQ) as a quantitative tool while a face to face interview was conducted as qualitative method. The study explored three types of violence experienced by the respondents that is emotional, physical and sexual violence. In each of the three violence types the extent of violence was measured through the questions established by the NorVold Abuse Questionnaire. The study revealed that majority of respondents (78%) had experienced mild emotional violence from their partners while only few of them (20%) had experienced mild sexual violence. Forty six percent of the respondents have experienced mild physical violence, making it the second type of violence experienced by many respondents while Seventy eight percent of respondents reported that they had experienced mild emotional violence in their relationship. For the case of factors for IPV the study shows that there is a significant relation between financial dependence, employment status, income per month, age at marriage and partner drink alcohol or use drugs with respect to Intimate partner violence in Arumeru District.

**KEYWORDS:** Intimate, Partner, Violence, Abuse, Women

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Violence against Women has been categorized as grave unjust against human rights. To this, the General Assembly of the United Nations put forward a General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 1993 which required all member states to adopt the Declaration on the elimination of violence against women. Much as many countries have adopted the declaration to end violence against women, the statistics on women violence is still staggeringly high. According to UN data of 2021, it has been shown that one in every three women worldwide has experienced physical and or sexual violence. Africa and other low income countries are reported to have a large percentage of women violence as compared to higher income countries. WHO (2021) reported that Africa accounts for 31% of women violence while developed countries have 22% of women violence (UN, 2021).

Intimate partner violence; have been prominent among other forms of violence against women. Lancet (2022) reports that across the globe, 27% of women aged 15 to 49 years who have been in a relationship report that they have been subjected to some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner. The extent of violence results in a number of physical, emotional effects and even death. Recently statistics has shown that Intimate partner homicide have been increasing with 82% of the victims being women (UN, 2021).

As elsewhere in the world, Tanzania faces this grudge against human rights. Women throughout the country encounter this problem as early as their infancy. According to the census findings of 2012, 1 in 3 women in Tanzania have experience either physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. Of women aged 15-49, 44% have experienced either physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Spousal violence prevalence is highest in rural areas, averaging 52% while the prevalence in urban areas averages 45%. Almost 30% of girls experience sexual violence before the age of 18 (World Bank Tanzania, 2022).

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Alcohol and drug abuse, low levels of education, low income levels, tradition and norms are among the determinants of intimate partner violence in Tanzania (Magombola and Shimba, 2020). According to Rugira (2015) Violence against women is caused by excessive alcohol consumption; economic conditions such as lack of food and other needs; denial of sex by a partner; extra-marital sexual relationships; use or abusive language; misuse of family income/property; failure to participate in household income generating activities and frustrations due to a decline in household income. Also traditional and cultural practices contributed much to violence against women. Complementing the above findings, Kinyondo et al (2021) states that IPV might be perpetuated by alcoholism, history of violence within the abusers family and polygamous situation. Moreover this study reveals that, women who accept wife beating in certain circumstances are more likely to experience IPV. In addition, women from middle income households were more likely to experience sexual violence compared to women from poorer households.

The Government of Tanzania, in efforts to curb violence against women have taken a number of steps including; Enactment and operationalization of relevant policies and laws to enhance policy, legal and institutional framework including coordination mechanisms, initiation and implementation of the National action plan to end violence against women and children and establishment of police gender desks in every district. Stipulation to end violence in the Development Vision 2025 and Enactment of Sexual Offence Special Provision Act 1998 (URT, 1999) also shows how the Government is committed towards ending violence against women in the country.

Despite these efforts by the Government of Tanzania, Violence against women is still persistent and feared to be on the increase side. Women are abused in both urban and rural areas around the country. Among those who are abused only few report to the authorities leaving the majority cases unreported. With this situation it becomes even hard to eliminate the problem, since the victims tend to hide the perpetrators. Arusha region, is among the mentioned regions in the country with many cases of violence against women. In Arusha 1 out of 3 women reported to be abused in the DHS of 2012. It is with this concern this study intended to assess (i) the type of violence intimate partners experience and (ii) the determinants of Intimate Partner Violence in Arusha Region.

### **THEORIES ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

This study is guided by the system and resource theories (1973). Strauss in systematic theory considers intimate violence to emanate from the family systems. Strauss stresses that violence and conflict are systematic product of family systems rather than inadequate socialization. With this theory it becomes clear that within the course of life, spouses within a certain family argue or differ in different causes making them fight or get abused. The abuses become repetitive and the violence cycle might take years or a lifetime. Giles-Sims (1983) explained the intimate violence cycle devising six stages building on the systems theory. The stages by Giles-Sims included (a) the establishment of the family system (b) the first incident of violence (c) stabilization of the violence (d) the choice point (e) leaving the system, and (f) resolution to more of the same (Wright, 2002). These stages explain a lot on why women who are victims of violence from their spouse stay in the relationship regardless of the ill treatment from their partners. They further explain the reasons why the aggressor continues abusing the victim even in the presence of laws and other instruments condemning this act. This theory applies in the study area since the incidence of violence towards women and children within the families have been even higher when compared to the past years as Statistics show that in 2021 a whopping 3,949 people, mostly women and children were subjected to harsh acts such as physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, domestic, child marriage and early pregnancies as compared to a lower number of 3054 incidences in 2019. Violence within families is what Giles-Sims stresses in the six stages of violence. He stresses that a child from a violent family is likely to be perpetrator of violence since he/ she has passed through the six stages of violence cycle and have observed their parents (mostly mothers) being the victim of the violent act.

Complimenting the system theory, the study is also informed by the resource theory. The resource theory suggests that intimate partner violence is present in families due to presence or absence of resources. It argues that men with few resources become more violent as compared to men with resources hence those with few resources opt to use violence to become dominant and respected in the family (Cools and Andreas, 2017; Goode, 1971; and Vyas and Watts, 2009). Among the resources considered to reduce violence in household is education and finance.

Education and employment within a family has been regarded as assets. It is argued that if the family has these two assets the levels of violence become low and in many instances it becomes rare. According to SIDA (2015); Cools and Andreas (2017) and Rapp et al (2012) it has been proven that the number of years a person spends in school has been shown to have a positive correlation with a decrease in both future victimization and perpetration of physical and sexual violence. Further education increases employment

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opportunities and hence improves socio economic status of partners. The empowerment attained reduces the unequal power relationship

### METHODOLOGY

Probability sampling technique was applied to get women for the study. This technique was used on the basis that women 1 of 3 female members of community have faced violence. So if the respondent has never faced any form of violence then she had the right to withdraw from the research. A total of 300 aged 15 to 60 were sampled for the study from Sing'isi and Akheri ward in Arumeru District. The study adapted the Validated Arabic Version of the NorVold Abuse Questionnaire (NORAQ) as a quantitative tool while a face to face interview was conducted as qualitative method. The NorVold Abuse Questionnaire was selected since it was developed for the purpose of measuring prevalence of emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse; the severity and perception of victims. In order to establish if the respondent have experienced violence the tool used categorizes violence into three levels that is mild, moderate and severe. For the case of mild emotional violence the respondent were asked the following question *"Have you experienced anybody systematically and for any longer period trying to repress, degrade or humiliate you?";* for moderate violence the following question was asked *"Have you experienced anybody systematically and by threat or force trying to limit your contacts with others or totally control what you may and may not do?";* and for severe violence the following question was asked *"Have you experienced living in fear because somebody systematically and for a longer period has threatened you or somebody close to you?"* For the case of physical violence from their partners the respondents were also asked they have faced mild, moderate or severe form of physical violence from their partners. Mild physical violence was inquired by the following question *"Have you experienced anybody hitting you, smacking your face, or holding you firmly against your will?";* while moderate physical violence was inquired by *"Have you experienced anybody hitting you with his/her fist(s) or with a hard object, kicking you, pushing you violently, giving you a beating thrashing you, or doing anything similar to you?";* For the case of severe physical violence they were asked *"Have you experienced anybody threaten your life by, for instance, trying to strangle you, showing a weapon or a knife, or by any other similar act?";* Another type of violence experienced by the respondents was the sexual violence. It was also categorized into three levels as the other two types of violence. In order to know if the respondents have encountered mild form of sexual violence the following question was asked *"Has anybody against your will touched parts of your body other than the genitals in a "sexual way" or forced you to touch other parts of his or her body in a "sexual way"?";* and for moderate sexual violence they were asked *"Have you in any other way been sexually humiliated, eg, by being forced to watch a porno movie or similar against your will, forced to participate in a porno movie or similar, forced to show your body naked, or forced to watch when somebody else showed" and for the case of severe form of sexual violence the question was "Has anybody against your will touched parts of your vagina, mouth, or Has anybody against your will touched parts of your vagina, mouth, or rectum or tried any of this, put in or tried to put an object or other part of the body in to your vagina, mouth, rectum area".* The validity index of the Questionnaire adapted is 0.90 while the reliability coefficient was 0.75. Supplementing the NorVold Abuse Questionnaire, an interview guide was used to collect information to 10 respondents who have experienced a form of violence from their partners. The questions in the guide where formed in a way that they could answer questions to help find answers to the two objectives of the study.

### ETHICAL PROCEDURES AND DATA ANALYSIS

The study followed ethical principles since it was a very sensitive subject to discuss with the victims and survivors of violence. It is with this concern that the respondents had to agree and sign a consent form. The respondents were informed about their right to withdraw from the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured.

Data analysis was done for both quantitative and qualitative information collected. For the case of quantitative data, the data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package Social Sciences) version 21.0. Since the study wanted to (i) assess the type of violence intimate partners experience and (ii) the determinants of Intimate Partner Violence in Arusha Region, the following analysis procedure was used. For the case of the type of violence experienced the study applied descriptive analysis to obtain frequency and percentage of respondents who have experienced emotional, physical and sexual violence. While for the determinants of IPV the study applied a multiple linear regression to test variables which might be the cause of violence to the respondents. The estimation of regression model for determinants of IPV is as follow:

$$Y = \beta_0 + X_1\beta_1 + X_2\beta_2 + X_3\beta_3 + X_4\beta_4 + X_5\beta_5 + X_6\beta_6 + \epsilon;$$

Where:

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Y= Experienced IPV

X1= Age of respondent, X2= Financial dependency, X3= Employment status, X4= Income per month, X5= Age at marriage, X6= Partner drink alcohol, abuse drugs,  $\varepsilon$  = error term,  $\beta_0$  = Regression constant,  $\beta_1 - \beta_6$  = Regression coefficient in the model

For inferential statistics, Pearson's Chi-square was used to test the relation between IPV and the independent variables. The T-Test was used to test the relationship between IPV and the quantitative independent variables. A p-value < 0.05 was considered significant.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented in three sections. The first section presents the characteristics of the respondents while the second section presents the type of violence experienced by the respondents and final part represents the determinants for IPV in the study area.

#### The characteristics of the respondents

The study had a total of 300 women who in a way have experienced different type of violence from their partners in their current or past relationship. The age, education level, marital status, occupation, residence status, education level of partner, income per month and type of house are presented in table 1.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (n = 300)**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age of respondents</b>		
18-24	11	4
25-29	22	7
30-34	78	26
35-39	87	29
40-44	72	24
>45	30	10
<b>Education level of respondents</b>		
No formal education	39	13
Primary	210	70
Secondary	33	11
University	18	6
<b>Marital status of respondents</b>		
Single / cohabiting	81	27
Married	195	65
Divorced	15	5
Widow	6	2
Separated	3	1
<b>Occupation of respondents</b>		
Formal employment	51	17
Farming & livestock keeping	132	44
Housewife	105	35
Retired	12	4
<b>Education level of respondent's partner</b>		
No formal education	54	18
Primary	108	36

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Secondary	96	32
Tertiary	42	14
<b>Residence status</b>		
House owner	101	34
Rented house	147	49
Family house	52	17
<b>Income per month (Tshs)</b>		
Less than 100,000/=	108	36
Between 100,000/= and 200,000/=	132	44
Between 200,000/= and 500,000/=	54	18
Above 500,000/=	6	2

From Table 1 it is revealed that majority of respondents 237 were from 30 to 44 years. The study involved only female respondents who have encountered a certain type of violence, since it was based on probability sampling, those who have not encountered violence were not involved in the study. Only 11% of the respondents below the age of 29 were included in the study. This brings out two assumptions one being that this age group though in marriage or other intimate relationship are afraid to talk about this issue or they are forbidden to discuss this issue. Age has been regarded as a risk factor to violence as many study conducted have proved that female aged between 15 and 49 years encounter violence more than others (SIDA 2015; relief web, 2019; Cools and Andreas, 2017 and Rapp et al, 2012).

A good number of respondents have attained primary education (70%) and only 11% have attained secondary education. This is contrary to their partners' education level as 32% have obtained secondary education. However a good number of respondents partners' (18%) were illiterate. This might be a reason for higher incidences of violence among the respondents. Educations have been mentioned as a catalyst to reduce or increase domestic and intimate partner violence (SIDA, 2015). In a study by Plan International (2012) it was revealed that the number of years a person spends in school has been shown to have a positive correlation with a decrease in both future victimisation and perpetration of physical and sexual violence.

Sixty five percent of respondents reported to be married at the time the research was conducted. This implies that intimate partner violence do occur in marital homes more than in other form of relationship since the study dealt with women respondents who had experienced violence within their lifetime. These findings might be different from other findings who report that married couples have less violence incidence than unmarried couples. Frias and Angel (2005) conducted a study of violence among women who were married against those who where unmarried. The results of this study indicated that women who are married are less likely to experience violence than their unmarried counterparts.

A good number of respondents (44%) reported to earn between 100,000/= and 200,000/= TZS while 36% reported to earn less than 100,000/= TZS. This finding clearly shows that majority of respondents (80%) earns less than 6,700 TZS per day. Despite earning beyond the poverty line which is 3734 TZS a good number of these respondents might still be poor since World Bank report of 2019 reveals that Poverty in Tanzania remains at 49% of the population which is almost half the population. The report further reveals that poverty in Tanzania is substantial as three Tanzanians fell into poverty for every four. Income of partners plays a crucial part in family calmness and peace. Poverty has been associated by increased incidence of violence (Reis, 2019). According to this author poor households show higher rates of abuse and specifically women in poorer households are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence than women in slightly better off households. It is with this concern the study measured the income of the respondents aiming to know their income status.

### **Type of violence experienced by respondent.**

The study explored three types of violence experienced by the respondents that is emotional, physical and sexual violence. In each of the three violence types the extent of violence was measured through the questions established by the NorVold Abuse Questionnaire. The questionnaire intended to know if the respondents have experienced the violence mildly, moderately or severely. Table 2 reveals that majority of respondents had experienced mild emotional violence (78%) from their partners while only few of them (20%) had

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experienced mild sexual violence. Forty six percent of the respondents have experienced mild physical violence, making it the second type of violence experienced by many respondents.

**Table 2: Type of violence experiences by respondents (n=300)**

Type of Violence	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Emotional violence</b>		
Mild	234	78
Moderate	69	23
Severe	60	20
<b>Physical Violence</b>		
Mild	138	46
Moderate	150	50
Severe	48	16
<b>Sexual Violence</b>		
Mild	60	20
Moderate	33	11
Severe	30	10

Seventy eight percent of respondents reported that they had experienced mild emotional violence in their relationship. They explained that they have encountered repression, humiliation and sometimes they have been degraded by their partners and spouses. On another hand 288 respondents reported to have experience Mild to Moderate physical violence while 123 respondents revealed that they have been sexually abused by their partners in their lifetime.

According to Engel (2002) emotional violence is a nonphysical behavior or attitude that is designed to control, subdue, punish or isolate another person through the use of humiliation or fear. The respondents reported to have been emotionally abused consequently by their intimate partners in different ways. Threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation were the common type of emotional abuse experienced by the respondents as the following respondent in an interview states;

*“My husband controls my mobile phone. He bought the phone for me as a gift but he controls everything I do with that phone. He reads all the messages and even listens to the conversation I make with the phone while he is around. He interrogates every call I make and threatens to hit me if he does suspect that I am not telling him the truth”. (Interviewee 006, Arumeru, Arusha)*

Emotional abuse has been correlated with other types of abuse such as physical, economic and sexual abuse. The person who is isolated and is emotionally abused can easily be violated physically or sexually since they are controlled by the abuser. Gondolf et al (2002) substantiates this as they report that there is a high correlation between physical abuse and emotional abuse in batterer populations and verbal abuse early in a relationship predicts subsequent physical spousal abuse. This is further supported by Tracy (2022) who states that Physical and emotional abuse go hand-in-hand in many relationships. In fact, it is rare to find physical abuse without the presence of emotional abuse.

In the current study, about 288 respondents revealed that they have experienced mild and moderate forms of physical abuse. They reported Physical violence acts including punching, pinching, kicking, strangling, hitting (whipping), using weapons, throwing things and destroying properties among others. They blamed their cultures for the persistence of physical abuse within their society as one of the interviewee retorts;

*“In our culture, a husband is told to discipline the wife whenever she does something wrong. The wife on the other hand is not supposed to report this incident anywhere as it is forbidden. So the son grows seeing their mother being abused, what do you think? He will also end up being an abuser” (Interviewee 002, Arumeru, Arusha)*

Apart from the culture, poverty and financial dependency was also mentioned as a reason why the victims sustain the situation as this young wife reports;

*“In a week I can be abused once or even twice. When my husband goes drinking he comes home late. He wakes me up to prepare food and watch him eat. If I sleep while he is eating I get slapped, and if I do not prepare him the meal he likes I also get beaten. I am*

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*forbidden to complain this to anyone, so whenever I tell my mother about this she instructs me to calm down promising me that the situation will calm down eventually". (Interviewee 008, Arumeru, Arusha)*

Sexual abuse, like the other reported forms of abuse was reported. About 123 respondents revealed that they have been sexually abused by their partners or other male counterparts. Rape, inappropriate touching, being forced to kiss, being forced watching pornography and other illicit materials and fondling and also being forced into oral sex were among the forms of sexual abuse experienced by the respondents. They blamed sexual violence and especially rape to the culture. They reported that when a woman gets married in their culture, she can never deny her husband intimacy. She has to oblige regardless of any reason she has. This is what a respondent revealed during an interview;

*"In my culture, I am obliged to fulfill my partners urge for sex whenever he wants. It does not matter that I am sick or tired. Except when I am in my periods, so if I feel that I am not in the mood I just fake that I am in my periods so that he leaves me alone" (Interviewee 004, Arumeru, Arusha)*

### Factors associated with Intimate partner violence

A number of factors were associated with intimate partner violence in Arumeru district. After running a regression analysis it was learnt that at  $p = 0.05$  the  $t$  values for five factors become statistically significant because of their corresponding  $p$  value  $\leq 0.05$ . Therefore financial dependence, employment status, income per month, age at marriage and partner drink alcohol or use drugs are individually useful in the prediction of  $Y$  (Experienced Intimate Partner Violence) which is the dependent variable.

**Table 3: Regression coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	$\beta$	Standard Error	Beta	$t$	Significant
Constant	3.324	0.341		9.73	0.000
Age	0.74	0.91	0.14	0.53	0.562
Financial dependence	0.62	0.31	0.149	0.29	0.037*
Employment status	-0.081	0.028	-0.172	-0.285	0.005*
Income per month	-0.059	0.026	-0.126	-0.252	0.025*
Age at marriage	-0.122	0.027	-0.252	-0.458	0.000*
Partner drink alcohol or use drugs	0.104	0.052	0.109	0.208	0.004*

From the regression equation above, taking all the predictor variables constant (zero), the dependent variable is 3.324. From the findings in the regression equation above it can be deduced that one unit change in financial dependence results in 0.62 units increase in intimate partner violence. Thus, financial dependence a strong positive and significance influence on Intimate partner violence. Similarly, one unit change in employment status results in -0.081 units increase in IPV. Furthermore, one unit change in income per month result in -0.059 units increase in IPV. Basing on the rule for significance level, the study indicates that there is a significant relation between financial dependence, employment status, income per month, age at marriage and partner drink alcohol or use drugs with respect to Intimate partner violence in Arumeru District.

Financial dependence, employment status, income per month, age at marriage and partner drink alcohol or use drugs have been reported elsewhere as the risk factors associated with not only intimate partner violence but domestic violence as a whole. In a study conducted by Dhungel et al (2017) in Nepal it was deduced that women's economic dependence on their husband was a risk factor to psychological IPV as the adjusted odds of this violence in women who had economic dependence on husband was 3 times higher than the odds of women without dependence. In another study by Singh et al (2022) this was also the case since their study found out that women who were financial dependent on husbands were more likely to report experiences of IPV within the past 12 months than women who were not financial dependent on their husbands. This was also the case in Arumeru since the respondents reported the same. They reported that financial dependence makes them to be tied to their partners so that they can fulfill their basic needs and that of their children. The following case elaborates;

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"In our culture a wife becomes obedient once she stays home while the husband works. I normally take care of the domestic animal and banana plot at home, on the market day I go and sell banana and if at all I have eggs. That is the only source of income I have as a wife. Apart from that I depend on my husband to provide for me and my kids every need we have." (Interviewee 007, Arumeru, Arusha)

Age of marriage was also a risk factor to IPV since it was significant when tested. In Tanzania the age of marriage is at 15 years which indicates that the girl married at this age is still very young. She can be abused in many ways since she is still afraid and lack knowledge of her rights as a wife and human being. In Arumeru this is the case since the Maasai and Meru culture allows marriage at this age and even at a younger age than this. This has been a risk factor for husband abusing their wives. They are protected by the culture and the victims are denied the rights to report or leave the marriage by the same culture. Kidman (2016) substantiates this argument as their study reveals that child marriage also places young women at elevated risk for intimate partner violence (IPV), which is in turn linked to additional adverse physical and mental health outcomes. Men who marry very young girls may hold traditional masculine ideologies, and because of this be more likely to abuse their wives.

Another determinant of IPV was found to be alcohol and /or drug abuse. The respondents reported that their husbands or partners consume alcohol frequently and sometime they use marijuana or other hard drugs. They further emphasized that abuse in the household normally occurs once their partners are drunk, or have used the marijuana. Different studies worldwide have confirmed the relationship between alcohol and abuse. Dhungel et al (2017) in a study conducted in Nepal reports that alcohol use of the husband was a risk factor for psychological IPV. The odds of psychological IPV was about 5 times higher for women whose husbands used alcohol than those not drinking alcohol even after adjustment [Adj OR = 4.85, CI = 2.37–9.95]. Further Crane et al (2014) reveals the same as their study reports that alcohol and cocaine use disorders were significantly associated with IPV perpetration over the past year. A comorbid alcohol use diagnosis increased the likelihood of IPV perpetration among participants with either cannabis or a cocaine use disorder.

## CONCLUSION

The risks of experiencing Intimate partner violence increases in the communities as a result of financial dependence, employment status, economic status, age at marriage and partner tendency to drink alcohol or use drugs. This is the case in Arumeru but the study believes that it might be the case in other parts of Tanzania too. Women and girls in the country have been abused more as compared to the male counterparts. They encounter emotional, physical and sexual abuse. The findings from the current study indicate that women from the study area encountered emotional violence more as compared to the other forms of violence.

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