

Gender-based violence and Women Economic Empowerment in Apac Municipality.

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Background: The study focused gender based violence (GBV) and women Economic Empowerment (WEE) in Apac municipality. The research specific objectives were: to assess the factors affecting GBV, to examine the economic activities women, engage in, to analyze the relationship between GBV and women economic empowerment in Apac municipality.

Methods: The study used a cross-sectional survey design while adopting both the qualitative and quantitative method of data collection and data analysis. Data from questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlational analysis while data from interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. SPSS software version 20 was a computer application package used to analyze data.

Results: Findings revealed that the major factors affecting GBV in Apac municipality include; poverty and having multiple partners were the major factors influencing GBV. The study found out that the major economic activities that women are engaged in include; produce buying and selling, selling clothes, small businesses and fish mongering and have economically empowered women through giving them the access to educational information and supporting them in education of their children. The study found out that there was a negative relationship between GBV and women economic empowerment. It was found out that there was a positive relationship between government policies, GBV but there was a negative relationship between government policies and WEE in Apac municipality.

Conclusions: The government of Uganda through the ministry of health need to strengthen health sector response. There is need to develop a comprehensive health sector response to the various impacts of violence against women, it is important to address the demonstrated reluctance of abused women to seek help. At the service level, response to violence against women should be integrated into all areas of care (for example, emergency services, reproductive health services such as antenatal care, family planning, and post-abortion care, mental health services and HIV/AIDS-related services). Training is critical element in improving the health service response to violence against women. Also, there is need for the government to sensitize the masses on the negative impact of GBV so that they can learn from their own experiences.

Recommendations: The study recommends that the government should ensure effectiveness of the law to protect women more especially after settling all the conflicts that disrupt their family at police station or in courts.

Keywords: *Gender-based violence, Women Economic Empowerment, and Apac Municipality.*