

**Title: Educational Attainment and Domestic Violence in Uganda.**

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## **Abstract**

### **Introduction**

Domestic violence is a problem of public concern, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and many developing countries. This is due to its far reaching social, economic and public health consequences. In Uganda, there is absence of a domestic violence law and therefore the police and courts rely on laws that cover assault and homicide to handle it.

### **Objectives**

The general objective of this paper is to examine the effect of education attainment on domestic violence in Uganda. Consequently, the study seeks to examine the effect of some socio-economic and demographic characteristics on domestic violence.

### **Methodology**

The study is based on the 2006 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) which is a nationally representative survey of 8,531 women aged 15-49 years and 2,503 men aged 15-54 years. The filter data yielded 1,304 women aged 15-49 years and 1,063 men aged 15-54 years who are currently married or living together.

The data analysis was done using SPSS. A binary logistic regression model was computed to find out the effect of some demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents on domestic violence in Uganda.

### **Problem statement**

Domestic violence in Uganda occurs at an alarming rate and the problem is compounded by the lack of services available to the victims of these crimes especially in a home where individuals seek love, safety, security and shelter. Those victimized suffer physically and psychologically. Their human rights are denied and their lives are stolen from them by the ever-present threat of violence.

## **Rationale of the study**

Despite the dramatic increase in research focused on domestic violence, answers continue to elude researchers thus complicating the research process. One factor contributing to the difficulty in making progress in research and addressing domestic violence lies in understanding what constitutes domestic violence. The study therefore aims to examine the experience of violence, limiting it to physical and emotional violence among the currently in union and those living together for both males and females. Furthermore, this study tries to establish the fact that eradication of domestic violence, including the process to achieve this end, apart from contributing to social justice, helps development in proper sense, which is a concern for the entire society including even the abusers. Finally, this study aims to make recommendations with their potential benefits in a bid to curb domestic violence in Uganda.

## **Results**

Results in Table 1 below show that respondents with complete secondary and higher education status were less likely (OR=0.918) to experience physical violence compared to respondents with no education. Respondents who did not complete primary are about 2 times as likely as respondents with no education to experience emotional violence ( $p < 0.01$ ). However, respondent characteristics were not very significant in determining emotional violence probably because no variable can have control over experience of emotional violence. This explanation somehow does not hold for physical violence because for example cultural factors dictate the roles females and males ought to play in a family. This alone provides ground for experience of physical violence because of tension, struggle for dominance among others. Respondents with seasonal employment were more likely to experience physical violence than respondents who had employment all year (OR= 1.513;  $p < 0.01$ ). Other factors significant in the model include age, region of residence, religion, and wealth quintile. Surprisingly to note, results at multivariate analysis reveal that place of residence was not significant in influencing both physical and emotional violence.

Table 1: A binary logistic regression model of some demographic, socio-economic characteristics of respondents and domestic violence in Uganda.

Background characteristics	Physical violence		Emotional violence	
	$\beta$	Exp( $\beta$ )	$\beta$	Exp( $\beta$ )
<b>Education</b>				
No education (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Incomplete primary	0.540	1.715***	0.805	2.236***
Complete primary	0.457	1.580**	0.507	1.660
Incomplete secondary	0.073	1.076	0.440	1.553
Complete secondary and higher	-0.085	0.918	-0.205	0.815
<b>Age</b>				
15-24 (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
25-34	0.504	1.656***	0.055	1.056
35-44	0.636	1.888***	0.374	1.454
45-54	0.759	2.136***	0.446	1.562
<b>Employment status</b>				
Employed all year (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Seasonal employment	0.414	1.513***	0.105	1.110
Occasional employment	0.176	1.193	-0.374	0.688
Not working	0.228	1.256	-0.082	0.921
<b>Sex</b>				
Male (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Female	1.487	4.424***	1.048	2.851***
<b>Region</b>				
Central 1 (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Central 2	0.110	1.116	0.268	1.307
Kampala	0.128	1.136	-0.909	0.403
East Central	0.327	1.387	-0.078	0.925
Eastern	0.609	1.838***	0.306	1.358
North	0.323	1.381	-0.453	0.636
West Nile	0.405	1.499	-1.465	0.231**
Western	0.267	1.306	-0.423	0.655
South West	0.359	1.432*	-0.034	0.966
<b>Religion</b>				
Catholic (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Protestant	-0.126	0.882	0.240	1.271
Muslim	-0.447	0.639**	0.032	1.033
Pentecostal	-0.039	0.962	-0.611	0.543
SDA	-1.163	0.312***	-0.098	0.907
Other religions	0.089	1.093	-0.622	0.537
<b>Place of residence</b>				
Rural (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Urban	-0.090	0.914	0.138	1.148
<b>Wealth quintile</b>				
Poorest (RC)	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
Poorer	-0.009	0.991	-0.339	0.712
Middle	-0.366	0.694**	-0.306	0.736
Richer	-0.359	0.699**	-0.495	0.610
Richest	-0.712	0.491***	-0.628	0.533*
Constant	-2.526	0.080***	-3.350	0.035***

Source: Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS), 2006;

N= 2367; df=30

RC= Reference Category; \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

## **Conclusion**

The study adds clarity to the literature on the complex relationship between educational attainment and domestic violence. The study reveals that higher levels of educational attainment and higher wealth statuses were associated with decrease in domestic violence. This reduction in domestic violence as educational attainment increases could probably be attributed to an increase in one's autonomy and economic power.

It is recommended, based on the findings, that promotion of formal education should be emphasized an important component in campaigns against domestic violence in Uganda. Effective and higher education promotes respect for one another, enhances understanding as well as influences decision making in the household.

There is also a need to speed-up the enactment of two bills; the Domestic Relations Bill (DRB) and the Sexual Offences Bill (SOB) that have languished in Uganda parliament for a decade because political leaders described the bills as “not urgent”. It is important therefore that legislators, law enforcement groups as well as judicial systems recognize domestic violence as a crime that requires a legal instrument for its eradication. Notwithstanding, families, government institutions and civil organizations should have collaborative efforts towards addressing the issue directly.

**Key words:** Education, Domestic violence, Uganda.