

The Relationship between Spousal Violence and Levels of Education: An Analysis of the Zambia Demographic and Health Survey 2013/14

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Abstract

Domestic violence against spouses, especially women, is a serious human rights issue and a well-recognised global public health concern. While it is often attributed to low educational levels, research on this relationship has produced mixed results. This study investigated the association between domestic violence against women and education level, especially higher education, in Zambia. The data were sourced from the 2013-14 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey, which surveyed a nationally representative sample. A total of 11 778 women responded to the survey's module on domestic violence. Given that the study was interested in domestic violence experiences perpetrated by spouses, the sample was restricted to currently married women. The results show that wives with a higher level of education than their husbands were more likely to experience different forms of domestic violence than those with a lower or the same educational level as their husbands. Women's household wealth and age, the husband's level of education and spousal education differences were found to be significantly associated with domestic violence. It is thus concluded that increasing the educational level of both spouses could be effective in reducing domestic violence in Zambia.

Key words: Levels of education, spousal violence, Demographic Health Survey

La violence domestique contre les conjoints, en particulier les femmes, est un grave problème de droits humains et un problème de santé publique mondiale bien reconnu. Le problème est souvent attribué à de faibles niveaux d'éducation, mais les recherches effectuées dans le domaine ont produit

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des résultats mitigés. Cette étude a examiné la relation entre la violence domestique à l'égard des femmes et le niveau d'éducation, en particulier l'enseignement supérieur, en Zambie. Les données proviennent de l'Enquête démographique et sanitaire de 2013-2014 en Zambie, une étude qui a interrogé un échantillon représentatif au niveau national. Au total, 11 778 femmes ont répondu au module de l'enquête sur la violence domestique. Du fait que l'étude s'est intéressée aux expériences de violence conjugale perpétrées par les conjoints, l'échantillon a été restreint aux femmes actuellement mariées. Les résultats montrent que les épouses ayant un niveau d'instruction plus élevé que leur mari étaient plus susceptibles de subir différentes formes de violence domestique que celles ayant un niveau d'instruction inférieur ou égal à celui de leur mari. La richesse ménagère et l'âge des femmes, le niveau d'éducation du mari et les différences d'éducation du conjoint se sont avérés significativement associés à la violence domestique. Il est donc conclu que l'augmentation du niveau d'éducation des deux époux pourrait être un moyen efficace de réduire la violence domestique en Zambie.

Mots clés : niveaux de scolarité, violence conjugale, enquête démographique et sanitaire

1. Background

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2002, p. 2) defines domestic violence (DV) as “a particular type of violence characterized by a pattern of abusive behaviours by one or both partners in a relationship.” It takes many forms, including physical aggression, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, controlling behaviour, and economic deprivation.

Hodges and Videto (2005) note that violence against women can result in homicide or suicide. Furthermore, 42% of women who experience DV report injuries. Domestic violence can also lead to unintended pregnancies, induced abortions, gynaecological problems, and sexually transmitted infections, including the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Brownridge (2013) found that women who had been physically or sexually abused were 1.5 times more likely to have a sexually transmitted infection than those who had not experienced partner violence.

Violence against women is a global problem that cuts across social, cultural or religious groups (Abramsky et al., 2011). It is estimated that 4 400 people die each day due to intentional acts of self-directed, interpersonal, or collective violence, while many more are injured as a result of being victim or

witness to acts of violence (Krug et al., 2002, p. 1083). Globally, one in three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused (Daly et al., 2016).

The consequences of DV have led to calls for increased interventions to address it. In order to do so, policy makers and other stakeholders require an understanding of what causes it (Rapp et al., 2012, p. 1). Among other factors, the literature identifies individual factors, relationship factors, community factors and societal factors as determinants of DV (Owusu Adjah and Agbemafle, 2016, p. 9).

In terms of individual determinants, the level of education may impact positively or negatively on the rate of DV against spouses, especially women. There have been contradictory findings on this relationship. Some studies have found that women with lower educational status than their partners are at a higher risk of violence (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005), while others conclude that women of higher educational status than their partners are at greater risk (Jewkes, 2002; Taillieu and Brownridge, 2010).

The debate on education's association with DV against married women raises a number of issues, including (i) the extent of DV when a woman's level of education is higher than that of her husband, (ii) experiences of DV when the man has a higher qualification than the woman, and (iii) the extent of DV when the spouses have the same level of education.

While it has been posited that women who are better educated than their spouses never or rarely experience DV, research has shown that this is not always the case. James, Seddon and Brown (2002) found that women in India with a higher level of education than their husbands who earn more, or who are sole breadwinners, have a higher likelihood of experiencing frequent and severe intimate partner violence than those who are not employed or are less educated than their spouses. Cools and Kotsadam (2014) suggest that the relationship between a woman's level of education and her risk of violence is non-linear. High educational attainment is associated with a lower likelihood of being both a perpetrator and a victim of partner violence. However, women with minimal schooling generally have a lower risk of violence than those with more schooling. This argument is based on the link between masculinity, gender expectations, and violence (Bonnes, 2016). When men have few educational and occupational opportunities, they may seek to prove their masculinity through violence against their spouses, particularly if the partner has a higher qualification or occupational attainment (García-Moreno, 2002).

Another strand of the literature investigated whether a woman's spouse's education plays a more prominent role in determining the likelihood of DV. Chan (2005) found that in some rural areas of Bangladesh, a husband's education beyond the tenth grade was associated with a decreased risk of violence; in urban areas, a husband's education beyond the sixth grade had the same effect. However, Weitzman (2002) concluded that, women with more education than their husbands face 1.4 times the risk of intimate partner violence, 1.54 times the risk of frequent violence, and 1.36 times the risk of severe violence in comparison with women with less education than their husbands.

Domestic violence is compounded by life experiences and education plays a pivotal role. According to Deardon and Jones (2008), there is an inverse relationship between lifetime or recent intimate partner violence and a woman's educational attainment. Women with no formal education were found to be 4.5 times more likely to report lifetime intimate partner violence than women who completed more than 12 years of education. Moreover, husbands' higher educational levels were associated with lower odds of intimate partner violence, suggesting that poorly educated husbands are a risk factor in women's experiences of DV.

Turning to the effect of equal spousal education and experiences of DV, Wallis (2006) concluded that wives with higher levels of education than their husbands were more likely to experience DV than couples with the same level. In contrast, Indermaur (2001) argued that wives with better qualifications than their husbands had lower odds of experiencing less severe (OR=0.83, 95% CI: 0.77-0.89) and severe (OR=0.79, 95% CI: 0.72-0.87) DV than those in marriages between equally low-educated spouses (reference group). Equally high-educated couples were found to have the lowest likelihood of experiencing DV (severe violence: OR 0.43, CI 0.39-0.48; less severe violence: OR 0.59, CI 0.55-0.63).

Kingsley (2002) employed a logistic regression model and cross-sectional data on Albanian women to analyse the association between educational discrepancies between spouses and intimate partner violence. The results showed that women with a higher educational level than their husbands were more likely to experience such violence than those who were equally or less educated than their partners.

Problem Statement

Domestic violence is a human rights issue that is increasingly seen as an important public health problem (WHO, 2002). Despite global efforts to eliminate this scourge, it remains highly prevalent (Hodges and Videto, 2005; Jewkes, 2002; Taillieu and Brownridge, 2010). The 2013-14 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) shows that 47% of women aged 15-49 who had ever been married reported that they had experienced physical, sexual, and/or emotional violence from their current or most recent husband or partner. In order to develop appropriate interventions and advise policy makers it is crucial to establish the determinants of DV in the country. Given the fact that the current literature reports mixed results on the relationship between DV and spouses' educational level, this study investigated this association, particularly in relation to higher education, among married women in Zambia.

Overall Objective

The study aimed to examine the relationship between the level of education, especially higher education and DV against married women in Zambia

Specific Objectives

- To determine differentials in domestic violence experiences among married women with higher, lower or equal education levels to their partners.

Research Questions

The major research questions were:

- Is there a relationship between spouses' level of education and domestic violence?
- What differentials in domestic violence experiences exist among married women with a higher, lower or equal education level?

Given the high prevalence of DV (Hodges and Videto, 2005), it is important to determine the causes of this scourge. The study's findings will assist the Zambian Ministries of Health (MoH) and Gender (MoG), other line ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in formulating effective interventions to fight DV using education as a long-term tool. They

will also shed light on additional policies or programmes that need to be crafted to reduce or eliminate DV. Finally, the findings contribute to the body of knowledge and lay the foundation for further research.

2 Methodological Considerations and Designs

The data for the study were derived from the 2013-14 ZDHS, specifically, individual women's records from the survey module on DV.

The 2013-14 ZDHS used a two-stage sampling design with a sampling frame from the country's 2010 Census of Population and Housing (CPH, 2010). Given that Zambia has 10 provinces, 20 strata were created representing urban and rural areas in each province. The ZDHS selected 722 standard enumeration areas (SEAs) from the strata in the first stage of the selection process, from which 18 050 households were selected. A total of 16 411 women aged 15-49 were interviewed. The Domestic Violence Module (DVM) was administered to one randomly selected woman in each selected household. The total number of women who answered the DVM in the ZDHS was 11 778. This study was interested in DV perpetrated against women by their husbands; thus, the sample was restricted to currently married women. A total sample size of 9 552 married women was used in the analysis.

Outcome Variable

The outcome or dependent variable, coded "domestic violence" was generated from a number of proxy variables used to measure the presence of DV experiences. The survey included several questions on acts of a physical¹, emotional² and sexual³ nature, which this study classified as violence towards a female partner. Sets of questions were originally coded as "yes" or "no", with follow up questions to determine the frequency of the acts recoded as "sometimes", "often" or "not at all". For the generated DV variable, women who answered "sometimes" and "often" to the survey questions were coded as

1 **Physical violence** - • Ever been pushed, shook or had something thrown by husband/partner • Ever been slapped by husband/partner • Ever been punched with fist or hit by something harmful by husband/partner • Ever been kicked or dragged by husband/partner • Ever been strangled or burnt by husband/partner • Ever been threatened with knife/gun or other weapon by husband/partner

2 **Emotional violence** - • Ever been humiliated by husband/partner • Ever been threatened with harm by husband/partner

3 **Sexual violence** - • Ever been physically forced into unwanted sex by husband/partner • Ever been forced into other unwanted sexual acts by husband/partner?

"yes". Those who answered "no" and "not at all" to the same questions were coded as "no" for the purpose of this study. This process was followed for the questions on physical, emotional and sexual violence. The DV variable was therefore coded as 1 for "yes" for women who reported ever experiencing any/ and or all three forms of violence, and 0 for "no" for women who had never experienced any form of violence.

Predictor Variables

The main predictor or independent variable in this study was the respondents' highest level of education, coded as no education, primary, secondary and higher education.

Other predictor or explanatory variables included the respondent's age, household wealth index, place of residence, partner's education and spousal education difference. The age of the respondent variable categorised the ages into five-year intervals from 15 to 49. This variable was used as originally coded in the dataset (15-19, 20-24 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44 and 45-49). The household wealth index was used as a proxy for the respondent's wealth status and consisted of poorest, poor, middle, rich and richest. This was recoded into poor, middle and rich quintiles by grouping poorest and poor together while rich and richest were also joined. The place of residence referred to an individual's dwelling in a rural or urban area; this variable was used as originally coded in the dataset. Partner's highest level of education was handled in the same way as that of the respondent.

The variable spousal education difference (SED) was generated using the respondent's and partner's education level. Instead of using the suggested method of deducting the wife's education from the husband's, the variable was divided into four categories, namely, "wife better educated", "husband better educated", "equally low educated" and "equally high educated". For these categories, the respondent's education level and that of their partner were regrouped into lower education (combining no education and primary education) and high education (combining secondary and higher education). Women classified as lower education were matched with their partners to come up with a category coded "equally low educated", while those whose education matched their partner's at a higher level, were coded as "equally high educated". Women who reported that they had a low level of education but that their husband had a higher level were coded as "husband more educated". Lastly, women who reported higher education attainment than

their spouses were coded as “wife more educated”.

Conceptual Framework

Following thorough engagement with the literature and conceptualisation with detailed methodological adjustments and explanations of how DV occurs, Figure 1 illustrates how different predictor variables identified in this study are likely to influence married women’s experience of DV in Zambia. The figure shows that women’s education level can operate through SED, which then operates through age, residence and the wealth index to determine women’s likelihood of ever experiencing DV.

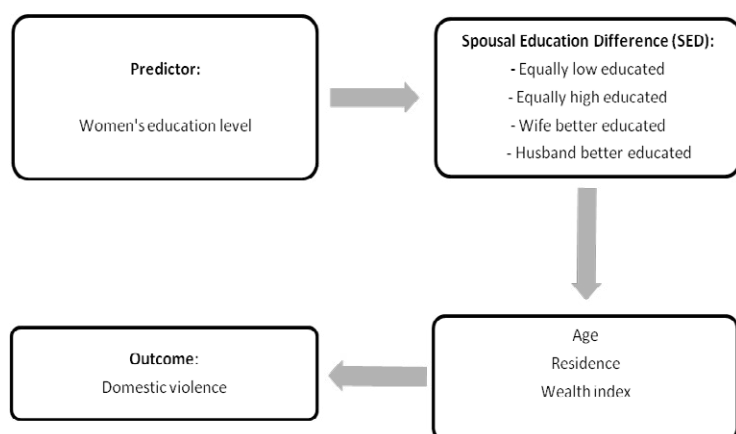


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Domestic Violence Education Pathways

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using Stata software version 13. A data weighting process was designed before analysis commenced to take into account the complex ZDHS sampling design methodology with multistage processes. The analysis included bivariate analysis (chi square test) and multivariate analysis using a binary logistic regression model. The chi square test of independence was conducted to examine the relationship between experiences of DV among married women and each independent variable. Multivariate analysis was undertaken to examine the association between and/among each independent variable and the odds of women experiencing DV.

Strengths of the ZDHS Dataset

The ZDHS dataset has a number of strengths. The survey uses probability sampling to select participants from the entire country, which validates generalisation of the findings to the whole population. The standard form used allows for comparability within and between countries and between repeat surveys. Data are collected by means of a carefully designed questionnaire that is administered by highly experienced interviewers with extensive training and supervision, which ensures the high quality of the data.

3 Results

Experiences of Physical, Emotional and Sexual Violence

Table 3.1 shows the percentage distribution of married women who had and had not experienced physical, emotional, sexual and domestic violence⁴.

Table 3.1: Experiences of Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Domestic Violence (Combined)

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Physical Violence	No	5 071	63.0
	Yes	2 979	37.0
	Total	8 050	100.0
Emotional Violence	No	6 276	77.8
	Yes	1 793	22.2
	Total	8 069	100.0
Sexual Violence	No	6 788	84.1
	Yes	1 282	15.9
	Total	8 069	100.0
Domestic Violence (physical, sexual and emotional violence)	No	4 381	54.5
	Yes	3 664	45.5
	Total	8 045	100.0

⁴ It should be noted that the domestic violence (DV) variable was created from all women who reported having experienced physical, emotional or sexual violence from a husband/partner. These forms of violence are not mutually exclusive and a woman may report having experienced one, two or all the three forms of violence.

About 37%, 22.2% and 15.9% of women reported having ever experienced physical, emotional and sexual violence, respectively. Furthermore, 45.5% of all married women who responded to the DV module stated that they had ever experienced DV from their spouses.

Differentials of domestic violence experiences among women with higher, lower and equal education levels with their partners

Table 3.2 shows the differentials of experiencing DV among married women by various background variables. It presents the percentage distributions of women who had experienced DV and chi-square test results by each of the independent or predictor variables.

Table 3.2: Experiences of spousal domestic violence by different variables – Chi2 Test

Variable	Experienced DV		Not Experienced DV		P-value
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
Age					
15-19	184	39.2	285	60.8	0.248
20-24	674	45.1	822	54.9	
25-29	916	47.6	1 008	52.4	
30-34	775	45.8	917	54.2	
35-39	550	45.5	659	54.5	
40-44	344	45.6	410	54.4	
45-49	222	44.1	281	55.9	
Residence					
Urban	1 353	43.6	1 753	56.4	0.064
Rural	2 310	46.8	2 629	53.2	
Wealth index					
Poor	1 638	47.7	1 794	52.3	0.000
Middle	766	49.1	793	50.9	
Rich	1 259	41.2	1 794	58.8	
Women's educational level					
No education	401	44.9	493	55.15	0.000
Primary	2 194	48.6	2 323	51.4	
Secondary	965	43.8	1 240	56.2	

Higher	113	34.2	217	59.1	
Husband's education level					
No education	223	44.8	275	55.2	0.000
Primary	1 598	49.0	1 662	51.0	
Secondary	1 534	45.6	1 832	54.4	
Higher	227	34.19	437	65.81	
Spousal education difference					
Equally low educated	1 602	48.4	1 711	51.6	0.000
Equally high educated	834	39.2	1 291	60.8	
Wife better educated	216	48.9	226	51.1	
Husband better educated	908	46.6	1 043	53.4	

Domestic violence experiences differ by women's background characteristics. The results show that 47.6% of women aged 25-29, 45.8% aged 30-34 and 39.2% aged 15-19 years had ever experienced DV. However, there is no significant relationship (p=0.248) between a woman's age and experiences of DV. The results also show that 46.8% and 43.6% of women residing in rural and urban areas, respectively, had experienced DV. Close to half of women from middle (49.1%) and poor (47.7%) income households reported having experienced DV (p=0.000).

The findings in Table 3.2 further show that there is a significant relationship (p=0.000) between women's education level, husband's education level and SED differences, and women experiencing DV. Close to half of women (49%) with primary education and about 44% of those with no education had experienced DV. Similarly, almost half (49%) of women whose husbands had primary education and 44.9% of those whose husbands had no education had experienced DV. The results indicate that 48.4% of women who were better educated than their husbands, 48.4% of those who had the same low education as their husbands and 46.6% of women whose husbands were better educated had experienced DV.

Table 3.3: Bivariate output: Domestic violence experiences by SED, education level, wealth index, age and residence

Variable	Odds Ratio	P-value	95% Confidence Interval	
Spousal education difference				
Equally low educated	1.000			
Equally high educated	0.731	0.000	0.655	0.808
Wife better educated	1.022	0.272	0.805	1.298
Husband better educated	0.930	0.299	0.811	1.066
Women's educational level				
No education	1.000			
Primary	1.162	0.042	1.006	1.342
Secondary	0.957	0.580	0.818	1.119
Higher	0.640	0.001	0.4922	0.833
Husband's education level				
No education	1.000			
Primary	1.218	0.046	1.004	1.476
Secondary	1.041	0.684	0.859	1.262
Higher	1.284	0.222	0.915	1.801
Age				
15-19	1.000			
20-24	1.275	0.059	0.991	1.640
25-29	1.412	0.010	1.085	1.839
30-34	1.313	0.047	1.004	1.718
35-39	1.298	0.061	0.988	1.705
40-44	1.305	0.077	0.971	1.752
45-49	1.225	0.178	0.912	1.648
Residence				
Urban	1.000			
Rural	1.138	0.064	0.992	1.305
Wealth index				
Poor	1.000			
Middle	1.058	0.424	0.921	1.216
Rich	0.769	0.000	0.664	0.890

Table 3.3 presents the bivariate odds ratio output of DV experiences by SED, education level, wealth index, age and residence. The findings show that women who were as highly educated as their husbands were significantly less likely to experience DV (OR: 0.690, CI: 0.589-0.808). Those who were better educated than their husbands were more likely to experience DV (OR: 1.022, CI: 0.805-1.298). The table also shows that women with primary education were significantly more likely to experience DV (OR: 1.162, CI: 1.006-1.342) than women with secondary education (OR: 0.9567), higher education (OR: 0.640 CI:0.492-0.833) and no education (reference category). The same pattern is observed with regard to the husband's education level. Women whose husbands had primary education were more likely to experience DV than those whose husbands had secondary or higher education.

In terms of age, women aged 25-34 were significantly more likely to experience DV than those aged 15-19 and 35-49. Furthermore, the results show that women from middle wealth households were more likely to experience DV (OR: 1.058, CI: 0.921-1.216), with those in rich households less likely to experience DV than the other wealth quintile categories (OR: 0.769, CI: 0.664-0.890).

Multivariate output: domestic violence experiences and demographic and socio-economic variables

Table 3.4 shows the odds ratios of married women experiencing DV by spousal education difference, wealth index, age and residence with specific models ranging from 1 to 4. Women who were better educated than their spouses were more likely to experience DV (AOR=1.041, CI: 0.814-1.331, Model 4) than those who were classified as equally low educated as their husbands. However, in this model, the likelihood is not statistically significant. Women who were equally highly educated as their husbands were significantly less likely (AOR=0.737, CI: 0.613-0.886 in Model 4) to experience DV than equally low educated couples.

Women aged 20-49 were more likely to experience DV than those aged 15-19. Women aged 25-29 were 1.5 times (AOR=1.450, CI: 1.112-1.890) more likely to experience DV while those aged 40-44 were 1.3 times (AOR=1.305, CI: 0.966-1.761) more likely to experience DV than their counterparts aged 15-19.

In rural settings, married women were significantly less likely to experience DV (AOR=0.824, CI: 0.686-0.989 in Model 4) than those in

urban areas. The results also show that women from rich households (rich wealth quintile) were significantly less likely to experience DV (AOR=0.749, CI: 0.609-0.920) than those in the middle wealth quintile (AOR= 1.036, CI: 0.896-1.197) and those from poor households (reference category).

Table 3.4: Multivariate Results: Domestic violence by SED, wealth index, age and residence

Variable	Model 1 OR [95% CI]	Model 2 OR [95% CI]	Model 3 OR [95% CI]	Model 4 OR [95% CI]
Spousal education difference				
Equally low educated	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Equally high educated	0.690*** [0.589,0.808]	0.683*** [0.581,0.803]	0.678*** [0.569,0.807]	0.737** [0.613,0.886]
Wife better educated	1.022 [0.805,1.298]	1.015 [0.799,1.289]	1.012 [0.795,1.289]	1.041 [0.814,1.331]
Husband better educated	0.930 [0.811,1.066]	0.935 [0.815,1.072]	0.932 [0.810,1.071]	0.961 [0.834,1.107]
Women's age				
15-19		1.000	1.000	1.000
20-24		1.302* [1.009,1.680]	1.301* [1.008,1.679]	1.306* [1.014,1.682]
25-29		1.415* [1.085,1.845]	1.413* [1.083,1.843]	1.450** [1.112,1.890]
30-34		1.305 [0.991,1.718]	1.303 [0.989,1.716]	1.342* [1.018,1.769]
35-39		1.274 [0.965,1.683]	1.272 [0.962,1.681]	1.314 [0.994,1.737]
40-44		1.262 [0.938,1.699]	1.261 [0.936,1.699]	1.305 [0.966,1.761]
45-49		1.180 [0.830,1.527]	1.125 [0.830,1.525]	1.164 [0.856,1.583]

Residence				
Urban		1.000		1.000
Rural		0.987 [0.850,1.146]		0.824* [0.686,0.989]
Wealth Index				
Poor				1.000
Middle				1.036 [0.896,1.197]
Rich				0.749** [0.609,0.920]
N	7,643	7,643	7,643	7,643

OR: Odds Ratio, CI: Confidence Intervals * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

4 Findings and Conclusion

Domestic violence remains a problem in Zambia with the number of reported cases on the rise. This study investigated the relationship between levels of education, especially higher education, and experiences of spousal violence among married women respondents in the 2013-14 ZDHS. It also sought to establish the extent of the relationship between the level of education and DV as experienced by married women.

The study found that 45.5% of married women in Zambia had experienced DV perpetrated by male spouses. The findings also showed that wives who were better educated than their husbands were more likely to experience DV than equally low educated couples. Wives who were as well educated as their husbands were significantly less likely to experience DV. While a number of factors could explain these results, it is possible that men with less education than their wives are more likely to believe that they are justified in controlling their spouses and use physical force to accomplish this. Consequently, a man with less education than his wife may be more likely than other men to commit DV if he is threatened by the status that his wife's education may confer on her (Ackerson et al., 2008).

The study also found that older women (20-49) were more likely to experience DV than younger women (15-19) and that married women residing in urban areas were significantly more likely to experience DV than rural women. This could be attributed to the fact that women in rural areas are

less likely to report DV, especially where it is considered to be sanctioned by cultural or traditional norms (Benebo et al., 2018).

The WHO notes that DV is a global problem that affects millions of women. A 2005 WHO study on women's health and DV found that 56% of women in Tanzania and 71% of women in Ethiopia's rural areas reported beatings or other forms of violence by husbands or other intimate partners.

This study shows that education has a protective effect on DV but this effect is dependent on the husband's education. It found that married women in Zambia who were equally low educated (primary education or less) as their husbands were the most affected. In contrast, equally high educated (secondary level or higher) women in the country were less likely to experience DV. These findings are in line with Indermaur (2001) although his study focused more on the severity of the violence as opposed to the actual experience; it found that women who were better educated than their spouses had lower odds of experiencing less severe and severe DV.

The likelihood of experiencing DV among couples with an educational gap lies in between couples with equally high and equally low educational levels. This study found that wives with higher levels of education than their husbands were more likely to experience DV than those whose husbands had a higher education level. The results also seem to point to a reverse association of the experience of violence and educational level. This is in line with Wallis (2006) and Weitzman (2002) who found that, women with more education than their husbands had 1.5 times the risk of intimate partner violence of those with less education than their spouses.

Establishing the association between spousal education differences and DV requires an understanding of the terms equally-high and equally-low educated couples. The probability of DV among spouses with educational differences lie in between these two extremes. This study found that wives who were more highly educated than their husbands had an increased likelihood of suffering DV. This contradicts some studies and may be peculiar to the Zambian scenario. For example, James, Seddon and Brown (2002) concluded that women with higher education qualifications may not be at risk of DV; indeed, they suggest that education seems to be an important factor in preventing DV irrespective of sex and marital status. The opposite was found in the Zambian case. The reasons may lie in factors which the data in the ZDHS did not cover. For example, do men feel socially and culturally threatened by more educated women and therefore seek to subdue them by

subjecting them to violence? The literature shows that, a wife's increasing or increased level of education when that of her husband is low can be seen as a threat to his power in the household. Moreover, if her increasing education results in more gender-equal views on the household division of labour or equal decision making, this could create tension, especially in a household where the husband has a low level of education and may not be exposed to such views (Bonnes, 2016).

The role education plays in determining DV experiences is also intricately linked to wealth. This study's findings suggest that a women's wealth quintile, education level, husband's level of education and spousal education difference were or are significantly associated with experiencing DV. These results are both consistent with and contrast those of other studies. Yount and Carrea (2006); Luke et al. (2007) and Kwagala (2013) report a positive relationship between household wealth and experiencing DV. However, they also found that women in the middle wealth quintile were comparatively more likely to experience DV. The backlash hypothesis within the feminist discourse may be useful to interpret the finding on the relationship between higher levels of wealth and increased prevalence of DV. It asserts that men who perpetrate violence against empowered women may be threatened by the loss of authority, power, and masculinity due to women's social mobility, and use violence as a means to keep women in "their place" to maintain the status quo (Brownmille, 1975). In many Southern African countries, it is expected that men hold the authority in a marriage; thus, a wife's increased decision-making power and assertiveness could not only question such authority, but also reduce her economic and social dependence on her husband, upsetting traditional gender expectations in the marriage (Bonnes, 2016). The husband might resort to violence against his wife in order to regain the power he feels he has lost (Claudia García-Moreno, 2002).

Implications of the Findings

The study's findings challenge previous studies that concluded that a woman's education is a significant protective factor against DV. This suggests the need to examine education's effect in tandem with traditional and/or cultural expectations that define men and women's roles. The question therefore is whether education changes such cultural or traditional norms or whether it inflicts 'cultural or traditional wounds' which topple power structures in homes and society at large and therefore pose a significant threat to traditionalists or

culturalists? Given the extent of DV at the global level, crosscutting holistic interventions, including education should be designed to take stock of what dictates what: Culture/Tradition vs Education. Furthermore, equal education rather than girls or women only interventions will be important to curb DV among married women in particular and women in general.

Conclusion

Millions of women are affected by DV that cuts across socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Despite ongoing efforts to protect women and vulnerable populations against violence, much remains to be done. This article examined the effect of spousal education differences on experiences of DV. Education seems to be an important factor in preventing spousal DV in Zambia, although in some instances, it does not have a major impact.

The results presented in this article suggest that equally high educated couples are more likely to engage in dialogue when marital disputes and conflicts arise than those with other education levels. It can thus be concluded that higher levels of education can be a protective factor against DV. Given that these results differ from those of other studies, factors that may have influenced them, such as differences in the classifications used, especially with regard to differences between spouses' education, need to be taken into account. A crucial limitation of earlier studies is that they did not seem to divide categories of couples with no education differences into two subgroups (equally low educated and equally high educated). The current study shows that these two subgroups differ significantly with respect to experiences of violence.

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