



Women's Attitudes towards Wife-beating among Currently Married Women in Zambia

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author TK designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author TCK managed the literature review and edited the report. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined factors associated with attitudes towards justification of wife-beating among currently married women in Zambia. This paper utilizes secondary data from the 2013 Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS). Logistic regression analysis was used to identify various factors associated with women's attitude towards wife-beating. Results show that the youngest women were more likely to justify and endorse wife-beating as compared to older women. Results further showed that women's attitude towards wife-beating is associated with those who had marital duration of 15 years or more (1.02–1.47; $P < 0.0299$), being educated at higher level (1.68–1.86; $p < 0.001$), being poor (1.78–1.89; $p < 0.001$), working (1.39–1.69; $p < 0.001$) and working (1.08–1.31; $p < 0.001$). Results further indicate that women whose husbands drank alcohol were 1.2 times more likely to endorse wife-beating as justified in contrast to those women whose husbands never drank alcohol. It is, therefore, essential that variables that increase women's access to resources and knowledge such as education, employment for cash and media exposure are emphasized so as to enable women realize their worth and full potential. This is very

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important as it is only through such empowerment issues that women are able to fully access other facilities like maternal healthcare services without fear. It is also recommended for various stakeholders to bring about sensitization programmes that would be based on intimate partner violence in societies and to couples. This will help in building the knowledge base and raise awareness on some of the cultural norms that influence wife-battering which may result in reduced violence in due course.

Keywords: Domestic violence; wife-beating; spousal battering; wife-battering.

1. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a pervasive vice affecting millions of people worldwide. Prevalent in most parts of the world, domestic violence against women is reported across the globe—Asia, Europe, Africa, North and South America [1–8]. From over three decades ago, domestic violence against a partner was viewed as a public health emergency and a public health crisis [9-12]. The impact of domestic violence against a partner is well documented [13-18]. For example, battered women suffer a broad range of physical and psychological problems including bruises, scratches and permanent bodily damage, or even death [19]. Research findings from clinical samples consistently reveal numerous psychological problems among battered women—anxiety, depression, anger and rage, nightmares, dissociation, shame, lowered self-esteem, somatic problems, sexual problems, addictive behaviours, and other impaired functioning [14,16,20,21-27]. Despite targeting women, consequences of partner violence go beyond to affect children.

Research shows that a substantial number of children exposed to domestic violence suffer physical injury [28] and psychological injury ranging from severe emotional maladjustment, behavioural problems, to a repetition of the violence and aggression to which they have been exposed creating a generational pattern of the vice. The increase of domestic violence led to heightened discourse among many nations leading to international statements for advocacy to stop violence against women [29]. Despite attracting international attention, global data on prevalence, nature, causes, and consequences of domestic violence still remains scarce, restricting the understanding of the magnitude and seriousness of the vice thereby affecting the development of effective approaches and strategies to stem the problem [30]. Earlier, experiences of domestic violence included hitting, beating and assault a surge of killings and deaths that are currently being experienced. Unless domestic violence involves death, most of

these domestic violence cases go unnoticed and unmentioned; wounds are concealed while family and work life continues.

Domestic violence against women in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased to alarming levels. While global estimates of violence against a partner are at 10%–70% [31-32], in sub-Saharan Africa it is estimated at 20%–71% [33-34]. The extent of such violence perpetrated on women gives the impetus for further investigations that will help understand women's own attitudes towards wife-beating. These attitudes will give an insight into women's own tolerance of the vice and readiness to fight it. One of the major contributors of domestic violence in sub-Saharan Africa is the advent of 'modernization' or 'westernization'. Specifically, advocacy for women education and empowerment has majorly contributed to the rise in the vice [34-35,18,36, 20,37]. For example, many women are adopting western cultures that support non-adherence of the cultural values and norms by women in the wake of 'westernization' by promoting independence of women. While it recognized that some of the African cultural values condone, perpetuate and reinforce abusive practices against women [38,17] it is of interest to explore whether women share the same views. Highlights of the extent of domestic violence in some sub-Saharan African countries from the health demographic surveys show that about half of the married women in Zimbabwe experienced some form of gender-based violence [39] and 15.6% of women in Nigeria reported having experienced physical violence [18] and at least 30% of married women in Zambia experienced physical violence [31].

Despite domestic violence against women being a public health problem, there is need to explore the women's own attitudes towards wife-beating in the bid to develop programmes that may prevent domestic violence against women. In addition, these attitudinal findings may help with programming of messages intended for the perpetrators. Such a study is timely, particularly for Zambia, where the social context is highly

patriarchal. Studies pooled together findings from seven sub-Saharan Africa countries in which although Zambia did not feature in the said study [32]. In another study which included 17 sub-Saharan Africa countries [33] it was established that both men and women share the notion that women ought to be disciplined by force when they transgress from the normative societal roles [33]. Ante note that domestic violence against women justified punishment when they go against their normative societal roles [34]. As such, domestic violence against women is silently and indirectly supported as a social acceptance of wife-beating because of the subordinate societal position of women [35]. Most marriages in Zambia are founded on the patriarchal principle (male dominance/superiority) where the man is the head of the household and the wife subordinates by obeying. In patriarchies, wife-beating is considered as some form of discipline to chastise or correct mistakes or misdeeds.

Although many women in sub-Saharan African countries have experienced some form of domestic, there still remains a dearth of data generated to conclusively indicate the prevalence, nature, causes and justifications for wife-beating [36,37]. Many of the discourses in the literatures on wife-beating in Zambia focus on prevalence and determinants while women's own attitudes for wife-beating are underexplored [31]. It becomes imperative to investigate the women's own attitudes about wife-beating in a deep-rooted and rigid culture of patriarchy. The women's own attitudes of wife-beating are critical for overcoming the non-reporting of incidences of violence. The assumption is that if a woman perceives this violence as an integral part of 'male supremacy' culturally acceptable and a normal part of the marriage experience, she is unlikely to report such incidences of violence to appropriate health and law enforcement authorities. This study explores the factors associated with attitudes toward wife-beating among married women in Zambia. If interventions have to be put in place, there is a need to understand the married women's perceptions about the wife. The paper answers the following questions: (a) Is wife-beating a justifiable act in married relationships in Zambia? (b) To what extent have the married women accepted wife-beating as a norm?. The study offers an insight into the social environment and norms surrounding domestic violence by specifically examining the relationship between attitudes towards wife-beating and demographic

variables, socio-economic status (i.e. educational level, occupational status, and household wealth), and empowerment indicators (i.e. autonomy in household decisions, access to information and literacy).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper utilized secondary data from the 2013 Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) carried out by Central Statistical Office with the technical assistance from Macro International through MEASURE DHS programme. The ZDHS was designed to provide reliable estimates on demographic and health parameters at the national and provincial level. The 2013 ZDHS is based on a representative sample of ever married women aged 15–49 spread across the nation. The current study utilized the sample of 9552 currently married women. This is because the study wished to investigate the attitude towards wife-beating amongst currently married women.

In the 2013 ZDHS, a three-stage stratified cluster sampling procedure was used to select households. At first, Standard Enumeration Areas (SEAs) were randomly selected. A sampling interval of the SEAs was calculated by dividing the total number of households in each community by the number of SEAs to be selected in each stratum. The selection of the sample in each stratum employed Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling scheme, where the measure of size was taken to be the household count in each SEA. A random number was generated to select the first SEA in each stratum. To select the next SEA in a stratum, the random number generated was added to the sampling interval and this process was repeated until all the required numbers of SEAs in each stratum were selected. A detailed description of the survey design is available in the national report [40].

The 2013 ZDHS included a special module designed to collect information on the extent to which women experienced domestic violence in Zambia. The questionnaire included detailed questions on the type of attitude of wife-beating and physical violence experienced by women in the households. The household questionnaires collected information on the demographic and economic characteristics of all household members. The women's module which is applied to all women between 15–49 years of age includes data on the marital status, education, employment, as well as their partner's education

and occupation. The wealth index used in this survey is a measure that has been used in order to find out inequalities in household characteristic. It is a proxy indicator for measuring living standards of households.

2.1 Data Analysis

In this paper, the data analysis was restricted to currently married women. The analysis of data was carried out at two stages using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 12 (SPSS v 12); Firstly, cross tabulations were used to examine the relationship between the attitudes of women towards domestic violence taking into consideration their socio-economic, and demographic variables. For the statistical analysis, chi-square tests of independence were conducted at the bivariate level, and the differences were determined at $P < 0.05$ and $P < 0.01$ significance levels. Secondly, factors influencing justification of domestic were analyzed using logistic regression analysis, the dependent variable (wife beating) was classified into two categories, those who justified and those who did not justify wife-beating. The result of the logistic regression models were converted into odds ratios, which represented the effect of a one-unit change in the explanatory variable on the indicator of women's attitudes towards wife-beating.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Reasons to Justify Wife Beating

The reasons to justify wife beating are shown in Table 1. The percentage of respondents who agreed with at least reason that wife beating was justified was significantly ($P < 0.001$) associated with age, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, partner who drinks alcohol and decision making power. The percentage of respondents who agreed that wife beating was justified if she went out without telling her husband was significantly ($p < 0.01$) associated with age, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, husbands who drink alcohol and decision making power. The age group of 15 to 29 years old (39.9 per cent) was more likely to agree in comparison to age between 30 and 39 years (32.9%). Those that had 4 or more children (36.6%) were more likely to agree than those who had one child (32.8%). Further, respondents from urban residences (39.9%) were more likely to agree in relation to

women from rural residences (27.4 per cent per cent). Additionally, respondents who had only primary education (39.2%) were more likely to agree compared to those that had secondary education (26%). With regard to wealth index, respondents from poor backgrounds (44.1%) were more likely to agree compared to respondents from rich backgrounds (22.3%). Furthermore, working women (37%) were more likely to agree compared to those who were not working (31.4%). Those whose husbands did not take alcohol (38.1%) were also more likely to agree compared to those whose husbands took alcohol (32.8%). Also, those that made final decisions alone (37.1%) were most likely agreeable than those who made such decisions jointly (33.8%).

Similarly, the percentage of respondents who agreed that wife beating was justified if she neglected the children was strongly associated with age, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, husbands who drink alcohol and decision making power ($P < 0.001$). The age group of 15 to 29 years (40.6%) were more likely to agree compared to age 30–39 (35.5%). Women from urban residences (41.8%) were more likely agree compared to those from rural residences (29.6%). Respondents who only had primary education (41.4%) were more likely to agree compared to those with secondary levels of education (27.5%). In terms of wealth index, respondents from poor backgrounds (45%) were more likely to agree compared to respondents from rich backgrounds (24%). Furthermore, women who were working (40.1%) were more likely to agree compared to those who were not working (32%). Those whose partner's drunk alcohol were more likely to agree (40.4%) compared to those whose husbands did not drink alcohol (34.6%). Those who made decisions alone (38.9%) were more likely to agree compared to those who made such decisions jointly with their spouses (35.8%).

The percentage of respondents who agreed that wife beating was justified if she argued with her husband was significantly associated with age, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, husbands who drink alcohol and decision making power ($P < 0.001$). Women within the age group of 15 to 29 years old (44.1%) were more likely to agree compared to those in the age group of between 30 and 39 years old (37.2%). Those who had four or more number of children (42%)

were more likely to agree compared to those who had 2 to 3 children (36.6%). In relation to residence, those from urban residences (44.7%) were more likely to agree compared to women from rural residences (31.4%). Respondents who had only attained primary level of education (44.4%) were more likely to agree compared to those that had attained secondary level of education (29%). With regard to wealth status, respondents from poor backgrounds (49.7%) were more likely to agree compared to respondents from the rich backgrounds (24.9%). Furthermore, women who were working (43.1%) were more likely to agree compared to those women who were not working (33.8%); and those who made decisions alone (40.9%) were more likely to agree compared to those who made such decisions jointly with their spouses (38.5%).

Additionally, the percentage of respondents who agreed that wife beating was justified if wife refused to have sex with her husband was considerably associated with age, marital duration, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, husbands who drink alcohol and decision making power ($P < 0.001$). In terms of marital duration, women who had been married for 15 or more years (37.7%) were more likely to agree than those with a marital duration of 0 to 4 years (31.4%). Respondents with 4+ children (39%) were more likely to agree than those with one child (30.1%). With regard to religion, those from Catholic Church faith (38.2%) were more likely to agree in comparison to those from the Protestant denominations (34.3%). Women from urban residences (40.8%) were more likely to agree compared to women from rural residences (23%). Respondents who had only primary education (41.3%) were more likely to agree compared to those who had secondary education (23%). With regard to wealth index, respondents from poor backgrounds (46.6%) were more likely to agree compared to respondents from rich background (20.3%). Those who were working (39.3%) were more likely to agree compared to those women who were not working (29.3%). Further, those whose husbands drunk alcohol were more likely to agree (38.4%) compared to those whose husbands did not drink alcohol (33.2%); and those who made decisions alone (39.8%) were more likely to agree compared to those who made such decisions jointly (33.2%).

Lastly, the percentage of respondents who agreed that wife beating was justified if wife burnt

the food was strongly related to age, number of children, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, work status, husbands who drinks alcohol and decision making power ($P < 0.001$). Respondents within the age group of between 15 and 29 years old (32.2%) were more likely to agree to this compared to age group of between 30 and 39 years old (26.2%). Respondents with four or more children (29.5%) were more to agree compared to those with single child (26.2%). Respondents from Catholic denominations (30.8%) were more likely to agree compared to women from Protestant denominations (26.9%). Women from urban residences (33%) were more likely to agree compared to women from rural residences (20.3%). Respondents who had only attained primary level of education (32.4%) were more likely to agree compared to those who had attained secondary level of education (18.1%). With regard to wealth status, respondents from poor backgrounds (37.6%) were more likely to agree compared to their counterparts from the rich backgrounds (14.6%). Moreover, those who made final decision alone (29.7%) were more likely to agree compared to those who made such decisions jointly (26.7%).

3.2 Factors That Influenced Justification of Wife-beating

To understand the factors that influence attitude towards wife-beating, logistic regression analysis was carried out by considering the socio-economic, demographic variables. In this analysis, only data of those who agreed with at least one reason were considered for analysis (see Table 2). The results showed that age, marital duration, number of children, educational level, wealth status, work status, husbands drinking alcohol had influence on the respondents likelihood of agreeing to any of the reasons attempting to justify wife-battering. Results showed that women from age group 30–39 years and 40–49 years were less likely to agree that wife-beating was justified compared to the age group of 15–29 years (CI-0.39-0.60; $P < 0.000$). Moreover, marital duration 15 years or more showed a strong likelihood of justification of wife-beating as compared to 5–9 years (CI 0.97–1.55; $P < 0.000$). Similarly, those who had four or more children were 1.2 times more likely to report that wife-beating was justified, as compared to the counterparts (CI 1.02–1.47; $P < 0.000$). Women who had attained primary level of education were 1.8 times more likely to report that wife-beating was justified, as

Table 1. Reasons to justify wife beating

Characteristics	Percentage who agree with at least one reason	Percentage who agree that wife beating is justified					Number of currently married women
		If she goes out without telling him	If she neglects the children	If she argues with him	If she refuses to have sex with him	If she burns the food	
Age							
15-29	58.0**	39.9**	40.6**	44.1**	36.3	32.2**	2202
30-39	49.4	32.9	35.5	37.3	33.8	26.2	4038
40-49	50.1	33.5	35.6	38.2	35.9	26.3	3312
Marital Duration							
0-4	51.3	34.8	35.2	37.4	31.4**	28.1	2022
5-9	50.6	33.6	36.3	38.4	33.6	27.1	1959
10-14	51.8	34.6	37.6	39.9	35.6	27.0	1843
15 +	52.3	35.4	37.3	40.2	37.7	27.8	3728
Number of children							
1	49.1**	32.8**	34.0**	36.7**	30.1**	26.2**	1787
2-3	48.7	33.1	34.0	36.6	32.4	25.6	3183
4+	54.7	36.6	39.7	42.0	39.0	29.5	4582
Religion							
Catholic	52.7	35.8	37.7	40.9*	38.2**	30.8**	1770
Protestant	51.4	34.5	36.5	38.8	34.3	26.9	7782
Place of residence							
Rural	42.0**	27.4**	29.6**	31.4**	27.2**	20.0**	3977
Urban	58.5	39.9	41.8	44.7	40.8	33.0	5575
Educational level							
Primary	58.0**	39.2**	41.4**	44.4**	41.3**	32.4**	6325
Secondary or higher	39.1	26.0	27.5	29.0	23.0	18.1	3227
Wealth Index							
Poor	63.7**	44.1**	45.4**	49.7**	46.6**	37.6**	3859
Middle	57.3	38.7	42.4	44.1	38.9	31.2	2125
Rich	35.2	22.3	24.0	24.9	20.3	14.6	3568
Work status							
Not-working	45.9**	31.4**	32.0**	33.8**	29.3**	23.4**	3955
Working	55.8	37.1	40.1	43.1	39.3	30.6	5597

Characteristics	Percentage who agree with at least one reason	Percentage who agree that wife beating is justified					Number of currently married women
		If she goes out without telling him	If she neglects the children	If she argues with him	If she refuses to have sex with him	If she burns the food	
Partner who drinks alcohol							
No	49.4**	32.8**	34.6**	36.8**	33.2**	25.6**	6084
Yes	55.6	38.1	40.4	43.4	38.4	31.1	3468
Decision Making power							
Alone	53.6**	37.1**	38.9**	40.9*	39.8**	29.7**	2771
Jointly	50.8	33.8	35.8	38.5	33.2	26.7	6781
Total	51.6	34.7	36.7	39.2	35.1	27.6	9552

Table 2. Logistic regression analysis related to factors associated with wife beating

Variables	Exp (β)	95 % CI	P- value
Age			
15-29			
30-39	0.5651	0.48-0.66	0.0000
40-49	0.4851	0.39-0.60	0.0000
Marital Duration			
0-4			
5-9	1.0522	0.88-1.25	0.5677
10-14	1.1907	0.96-1.46	0.1002
15 +	1.2324	0.97-1.55	0.0805
Number of children			
1			
2-3	1.0836	0.92-1.26	0.3138
4+	1.2251	1.02-1.47	0.0299
Religion			
Catholic			
Protestant	0.9850	0.87-1.11	0.8060
Place of residence			
Rural			
Urban	1.1930	1.80-1.64	0.1997
Educational level			
Secondary or higher			
Primary	1.7658	1.68-1.86	0.0000
Wealth Index			
Rich			
Middle	1.4850	1.26-1.64	0.0002
Poor	1.7825	1.78-1.89	0.0000
Work status			
Not-working			
Working	1.5409	1.39-1.69	0.0000
Partner who drinks alcohol			
No			
Yes	1.1982	1.08-1.31	0.0002
Decision Making power			
Alone			
Jointly	1.0096	0.91-1.11	0.8570

compared to those from higher levels of education (CI 1.68–1.86; $P < 0.000$). Women who were from poor background were 1.7 times more likely to report wife-beating to be justified as compared to those who were rich (CI 1.78–1.89; $P < 0.000$). Working women showed a strong likelihood of agreeing to the justification of wife-battering. Those with working status were 1.5 times more likely to report that wife-beating was justified compared to those who were not working (CI 1.39–1.69; $P < 0.000$). Furthermore, women whose husbands drink alcohol were 1.2 times more likely to report being beaten by their

husbands, as compared to those women whose husbands never drank alcohol (CI 1.08–1.31; $P < 0.002$).

4. DISCUSSION

Research has shown that intimate partner violence against women is deep-rooted in many African societies, where it is considered a prerogative of men [41,42]. This study examined attitudes of women towards wife-battering in Zambia. Justification was tested across five marital situations which included: (a) if wife went

out without informing him, (b) if wife neglected the children, (c) if wife argued with him, (d) if she refused to have sex with him, and lastly (e) if she burnt the food. These situations were examined across socio-demographic and economic variables which also included decision-making responsibility in these marriages. Interestingly, most significant results recorded justification across all the six situations. To begin with, about half of all Zambian women believe that wife-beating is justified in at least some circumstances, although the proportion of women who approve of wife-beating varies by situation.

Overall, bivariate analysis showed that neglecting children and arguing with husband were two factors that got more support from women as a justification of wife-battering in marriage. A possible explanation could be that women attach so much value to child care and Zambian culture in particular does not allow a woman to talk back at her husband when he is talking. These cultural beliefs coupled with low educational levels among women were major promoters of wife-beating beliefs among women. These findings are supported by [43] who found that neglecting children and arguing with the husband as justifiable reasons for wife-beating among women in sub-Saharan African countries.

Married women in Zambia aged between 30–49 years and also between 40–49 years were negatively associated with justification of wife-battering in all circumstances as compared to their younger counterparts. This meant that justification for wife-battering seemed to reduce with increase in age of married men. The case was the same in Zimbabwe where a study found that younger married men and women were more likely to justify wife-battering, as compared to men in the older age groups [36]. These results may be associated with cultural similarities in marital beliefs between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Marital duration of lesser than five years was significantly associated with justification of wife-beating in one situation and not the other situations among the married women in Zambia. This situation was refusal to have sex with husband. Women felt that wife-beating was justifiable in such a domestic situation. Cultural beliefs in African marriage contexts can explain these results just as observed by [43] who highlight that cultural norms and beliefs were risk factors in intimate partner violence against women. The study also found that Catholic

women were more likely to justify wife-battering on two domestic accounts: these included refusal to have sex with husband, and if she burnt food. Surprisingly, there was no significant justification amongst the Protestant women of wife-battering. A possible explanation could be that Catholicism was more conservative on the position of a woman and a man in the marriage as compared to Protestantism. Number of children women had in the marriage was found to be a strong predictor for justification of wife-battering in Zambia. Across all domestic situations number of children women had in the marriage was significant with at least one situation. Going out without informing the husband was mostly justified by those women who had four or more children. Surprisingly, having four children or more, justified wife-battering across all the domestic situations among Zambian married women. A possible explanation of this finding could be that women in Africa find children the sole reason to remain married, despite the circumstances that find themselves in, and this has the potential to promote continued victimization and facilitate abuse.

Surprisingly, the study also found that place of residence was strongly associated with wife-battering. Women from urban backgrounds were more likely to justify wife-battering as compared to women who lived in rural areas across all domestic situations. These findings contradict the findings of [34] in which the opposite was true. Women from rural backgrounds reflected more tolerance towards intimate partner violence as compared to women from urban parts of Nigeria. Replication of these studies in the same settings can help explain these findings as confounding factors are also eliminated.

Women with secondary education were less likely to justify wife-battering in any circumstance as compared to those with only primary education. Low education status was positively associated with justification of wife-battering across all domestic situations. This shows that lack of higher education was a risk factor in the perpetuation of gender-based violence among women. The results also implied that empowerment of women through education was a solution in reducing gender-based violence against women in marriages. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study in Nigeria who found that women with primary education were at risk of intimate partner violence as compared to those with secondary education [34].

In this study, wealth status was a strong determinant of women justifying wife-battering across all domestic situations. Women from middle and rich backgrounds were less likely to justify wife-battering as compared to those from poor background. The possible explanation is that women from poor background are programmed to be submissive and have little decision-making power in a marriage setting. This is because marriage tends to be an important source of income and comfort for low economic status women; hence, they are more likely to normalize domestic violence against them as compared to women from middle and rich backgrounds. These findings, to a greater extent, suggest empowerment of women through economic skills training as an important starting point. However, research has observed that imbalances of power (either husbands/ partners or wives having more or relatively more power) are associated with adverse consequences, as revealed by this study and others [44,15].

Interestingly, working status was also associated with attitude towards wife-battering among women. Bivariate analysis showed that working women showed a strong likelihood of justifying wife-battering as compared to those who were not in employment. However, these findings contradict the findings of [15] in Zimbabwe who found that working women were less likely to justify wife-beating as compared to women who were not working. Notwithstanding the above, these findings suggest in line with [45] in Kenya who found that not being in employment made women financially dependent on their husbands and this meant that men had a greater decision power at home. The concern in the Kenyan study was that despite women experiencing physical violence, they still maintained their abusive relationships and financial dependence was most likely the reason. According to [33], most women in low-income countries work largely in informal sectors with low paid jobs. Moreover, they are usually exposed to the same patriarchal social structures at the workplace that may further strengthen the myth of male superiority.

Decision-making that involved making household purchase was significant determinant of attitude towards wife-battering among women in Zambia. However, bivariate analysis showed that this factor was significant on specifically three domestic situations: firstly, refusal to have sex with husband; secondly, neglecting the children; and lastly, going out without informing him. These findings are supported by [46] who argue

that decision-making power in families also helps in predicting domestic violence. They further add that women with greater power in decision-making are less likely to experience domestic violence than women with lesser power.

The study also found that making decisions on large household purchase jointly, reduced the likelihood of women justifying wife-battering. Those who made such decisions jointly with husbands were less likely to justify wife-battering compared to those who made decisions jointly. Similarly, making decisions on daily household purchases was also negatively associated with justification of wife-battering. Decision-making was also found to be positively associated with physical violence against women in Nepal district. These findings were associated with patriarchal social system which gave men more decision-making power as compared to women. This was found to encourage continuous victimization. Lastly and consistently, those who made decision related to visiting relatives or family jointly were also negatively associated with likelihood of justifying wife-battering [47].

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this paper, an effort has been made to examine the attitudes of women towards wife beating and to assess whether there is an association between women's attitudes and the likelihood of being abused. The results from the analysis suggest that age, marital duration, number of children, educational level, work status, and husband's alcohol consumption contributed to justification of spousal battering. It is our assumption that a high prevalence of wife beating is essentially a symptom of distorted social institutions and social norms affecting both men and women where the latter are affected more adversely than the former. We wish to further suggest that appropriate legislation, mechanisms to punish offenders and operation of care centres will best succeed only if a social consensus is built around. In conclusion, collaboration in decision-making at different levels seemed to reduce the likelihood of men justifying wife-battering. Interventions that target to reduce gender-based violence cases (GBV) by changing men's attitude towards wife-battering should focus on the young married youths below thirty years of age. Secondly these interventions should take into account place of residence, wealth status and working status. As part of the intervention, this study suggests that

encouraging married couples to make decisions collaboratively at all levels could greatly reduce the rates wife-battering in Zambia. Stakeholders are also encouraged to direct social investment towards empowering women with life skills that can uplift their economic position and decision-making position as well. Unique to this study on Zambia was the influence of the number of children, urban background and cultural influences as significant angles of consideration when intervening into intimate partner violence against women in marriages. Clearly, social demographic and economic factors have a huge explanation to make regarding factors influencing attitude of women towards intimate partner violence. Across different marital situations, women will either agree or disagree with justification of intimate partner violence against wives in marriages. The role of culture also came out loud in this study as encouraging power imbalance and promoting continuous victimization against women.

ETHICAL APPROVAL AND CONSENT

The survey procedure and instruments for the 2013 Zambia Demographic Health Survey was ethically approved by the Zambia Biomedical Research Ethics Committee. A written consent was taken from all of the respondents prior to starting the interview and was assured that their information would be kept confidential. Since this study is based on analysis of secondary data, the ethical approval was not necessary for this study. But the permission for the use of the data was granted by Central Statistics Office and Macro Inc.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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