



Impact of Gender Based Violence on Community Development: Case Study of Rumonge Commune

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Abstract

Gender-based violence is a global problem that affects women and girls of all races, colour and creed. It occurs across all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and in many societies, including Burundi despite different international, regional and national instruments ratified to protect women against GBV and its effects. This study conducted with 96 individuals selected using Alain BOUCHARD's technic highlights the impact of gender based violence (GBV) on community development and provide some suggestions for action in remedy to gender based violence persistence for full community development. It specifically shows the reasons behind the persistence of gender based violence in Rumonge commune and its implications on the bad living conditions of families. To achieve this, we opted for qualitative approaches with the use of the interview guide and quantitative with the use of a questionnaire administered directly to heads of households distributed in 6 zones of Rumonge Commune. These reasons are fundamentally linked to Burundian culture and tradition that structures how people have to behave and live in the society. In view of the impact of GBV, identified as a constraint to individual and

societal development, this article highlights a set of activities to be done to reduce GBV. These include community dialogues around laws regarding families, gender norms and development; education and awareness of the impacts and ways to prevent it for full community development.

Keywords: Gender, Community, Gender based violence, Domestic violence, Community development

Introduction

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a global public health problem that poses challenges in human health and development. The World Health Organization reports (WHO) that almost one third (30%) of all women experiences either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence during their lifetime. The prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence range from 23.2% in high-income countries and 24.6% in the World Health Organization Western Pacific region, 25.4% in World Health Organization European Region, 29.8% in the World Health Organization of the Americas, 36.6% in the World Health Organization of African Region to 37% in the World Health Organization Eastern Mediterranean region, and 37.7% in the World Health Organization South-East Asia region. In addition to intimate partner violence, globally 7% of women report having been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner, although data for non-partner sexual violence are more limited (WHO, 2013).

The highest rates of GBV are in developing countries, with some of the most extreme rates in African countries. Worldwide, approximately 100 to 140 million girls and women have experienced female genital mutilation / cutting, with more than 3 million girls in Africa annually at risk of female genital mutilation each year; and in the 28 countries from which national prevalence data exist (27 in Africa, especially in the eastern, north-eastern and western regions and Yemen), more than 101 million girls aged 10 years and older are living with the effects of female genital mutilation (WHO, 2012).

In Burundi, Gender Based Violence is a huge challenge and the prevalence of sexual violence is significantly higher. The GBV data from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2016 done by the Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of Burundi – ISTEEDU shows that 36% of women and 32% of men between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. For nearly six women out of ten (57%), the perpetrator of these acts was their current husband or partner. Among women, the percentage of those who have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (24% versus 17 %). The provinces of Rumonge (39%) and Kirundo (36 %) have the highest

percentages of women who reported experiencing sexual violence at any point in their lives. At 14 percent, Bujumbura Mairie has the lowest prevalence. Among men, Kirundo (12 percent) and Makamba (10 percent) had the highest prevalence and Karusi had the lowest prevalence (1 percent) (ISTEEBU, 2017). From that Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) of 2016, the province of Rumonge has the highest percentages of women who reported experiencing sexual violence at any point in their lives (39%) apart from unreported cases.

The current situation of gender based violence in Burundi is so whereas as a country mainly depending on agriculture, its main workforce is female. The Development Bank of Africa BAD (2014) states that Burundi's sector of economy is mainly based on agriculture. The primary sector (agriculture, breeding and fishing) occupy a large part of the working population (90%) especially the female population (52.9%), against 8% for the tertiary sector and only 2% for the secondary sector. The active population is 51.6% and the rural workforce is predominantly female (p. 12). The World Bank (2019) reports that Burundi remains among the poorest countries. The average annual income per capita is one of the lowest in the world; estimated at around \$ 280 per capita while the average for Africa is \$ 1 843 and the world average is \$11 651 (World Bank, 2019). Comparing these two reports from BAD and World Bank, one should imagine how community development can be attained in a poorest country in the world with its main workforce threatened by violence related to gender. The answer should obviously be that the way to community development is still far away. However, for sustainable development to be achieved in developing countries as stated by Tsitsi Marilyn Dzinavane (2016), it is imperative for development practitioners to recognize areas of inequalities and social exclusion, including gender disparities in society (p. 1).

The Government of Burundi has ratified the majority of international and regional instruments protecting women against GBV, including CEDEF, UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Kampala Declaration adopted by the ICGLR. 2011. The revision of certain laws such as the Penal Code (in 2009 and 2017), the promulgation in 2016 of a specific law on SGBV which corrects certain shortcomings in the Penal Code and introduces clauses that consider married men and women as equal. The Constitution of the Republic of Burundi adopted in 2018. In the framework of the Great Lakes Emergency Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Women's Health plan, three integrated gender-based violence centers have been established at the hospitals of Cibitoke, Makamba and Muyinga. They have been operational since February 20, 2017.

Despite all what has been done to fight against gender based violence, it is still a big challenge in the area. Much more remains to be done

to create an environment where women can live free from gender based violence and effectively contribute to the community development. What are the factors behind the persistence of gender based violence? What is the correlation between the persistence of poverty and bad living conditions of families and gender based violence in families? What can be done to reduce gender based violence in Rumonge Commune?

Whilst gender based violence threaten full advancement of women and girls by decreasing their ability to benefit, access and participate in their economic and social spaces, this paper seeks to identify the root causes of the persistence of gender based violence and its implications on the victims on community development in Rumonge Commune.

Methodology

This study was concerned with the impact of gender based violence on community development in Rumonge commune. It sought to identify the root causes of the gender based violence and its implications on the living conditions of the victims and the community development. Therefore, this study combined both qualitative method and quantitative method with the use of the interview guide for qualitative approaches and quantitative with the use of a questionnaire administered directly to heads of households from the six zone making up the Rumonge commune.

The population of Rumonge commune is estimated at 179,846 inhabitants grouped in 45.286 households according to Burundi Statistical Directory (ISSB, 2018); from which the sample was constituted. Considering time and financial constraints, the researcher used the sample survey. The sample survey was found with Alain BOUCHARD (1975) sampling technique which states that when the universe of the survey is greater than 1,000,000 respondents, it is considered infinite, it is made to correspond to a sample of 96 respondents with a margin of error of 10 %. And when the universe of the survey is finite, that is to say less than 1,000,000 respondents, the formula for the size of the corrected sample is applied. Seeing that the population of Rumonge Commune is less than 1,000,000 respondents; this therefore allows the researcher to apply the corrected sample size:

$$nc = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n}{N}}$$

nc = corrected sample size

N = size of target population

n = sample size for an infinite population

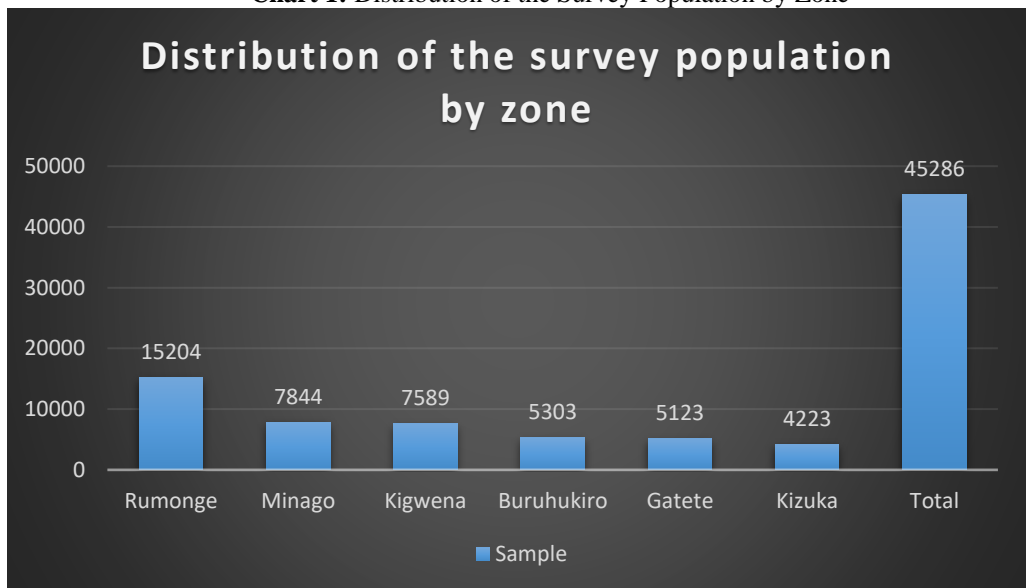
Thus, by applying Alain BOUCHARD's formula, the corrected total sample of this study is as follows:

$$N_c = \frac{96}{1 + \frac{96}{45286}} = \frac{96}{\frac{45286+96}{45286}} = \frac{96 \times 45286}{45382} = 96 \text{ Individuals}$$

The sample size for this study constitutes 96 heads of households from the six zone making up the commune of Rumonge. Stratification was adopted in order to distribute the sample population in the six zones of Rumonge Commune. This technique is the proportional allocation which consists in assigning the same sampling rate to each stratum. Stratified random sampling method was used to select 96 households.

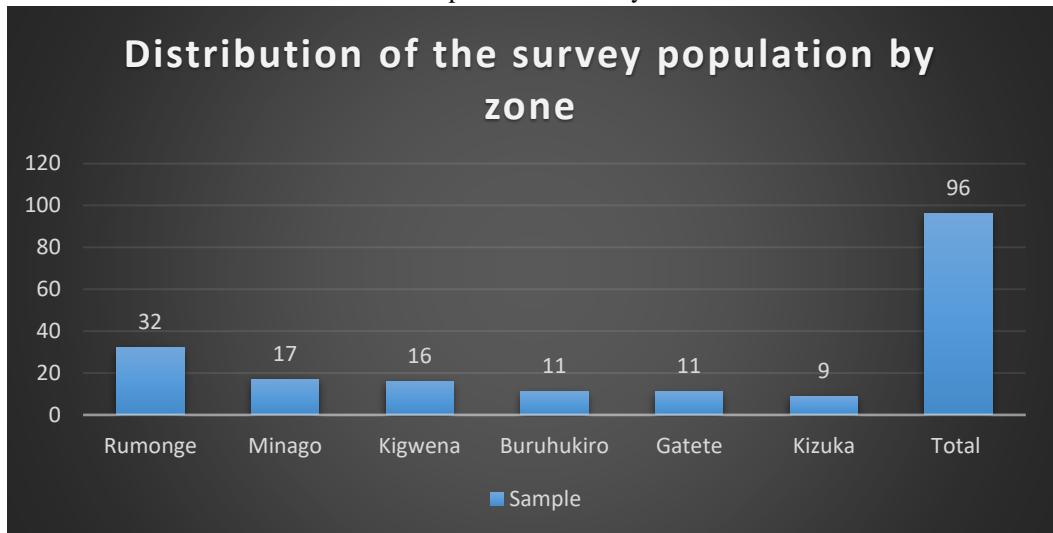
Target population

Chart 1: Distribution of the Survey Population by Zone



Source: Table established by the researcher from the monograph of Rumonge Commune

From a selected sample of 96 heads of households in a finite universe of 45286 households, we have proportionally distributed the samples in each stratum represented by a zone. Thus, the samples selected by zone are distributed on Chart 2:

Chart 2. Sample distribution by Zone

Source: Table established by the researcher from the monograph of Rumonge Commune

This sampling technique allowed us to identify 96 heads of households, that is 32 from Rumonge zone, 17 from Minago, 16 from Kigwena, 11 from Buruhukiro; 11 from Gatete and 9 from Kizuka

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents has based on gender, age, and level of education attained and the duty/work of the respondent. Thus, the chart below presents the identification of respondents according to their gender and age.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their gender and age

Age bracket	Men	Women	Total	Percentage
21-30	12	25	37	38,5
31-40	30	12	42	43,8
41-50	10	3	13	13,5
51 and older	2	2	4	4,2
Total	54	42	96	100
%	56,2	43,8	100,0	100,0

The table shows that men outnumber women. Among 96 respondents, 56.2% of respondents are men whereas 43.7% are women. This situation is explained by the fact that the questions were addressed to heads of households and that Burundi is governed by a patriarchal system. In certain circumstances or in the case of widows, women can be heads of

household. In addition, most of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years. 43.8 % of the respondents indicated that they were aged between 31 and 40 years, 38.5% indicated between 21 and 30 years, 13.5% indicated between 41 and 50 while 4.2% indicated 50 years and older.

Distribution of respondents according to their educational level

Table 2. Educational Attainment

Education	Men	Women	Total	Percent
None	2	6	8	8,3
Primary	23	28	51	53,1
Secondary	22	6	28	29,2
University	7	2	9	9,4
Total	54	42	96	100

From the table, it is clear that the highest level of education for most respondents was Primary level and most of them are women. 53.1% of the respondents indicated that their highest level of education was primary, 29.2% indicated Secondary level, 9.4% indicated University level while 8.3% indicated none level of education.

Distribution of respondents according to their occupation

Table 3. Respondents' occupation

Occupation	Men	Women	Percent
Farming	33	31	65.2
Trader	5	6	11.2
Civil servant	10	3	13.1
Private	6	3	9.1
Total	54	42	100

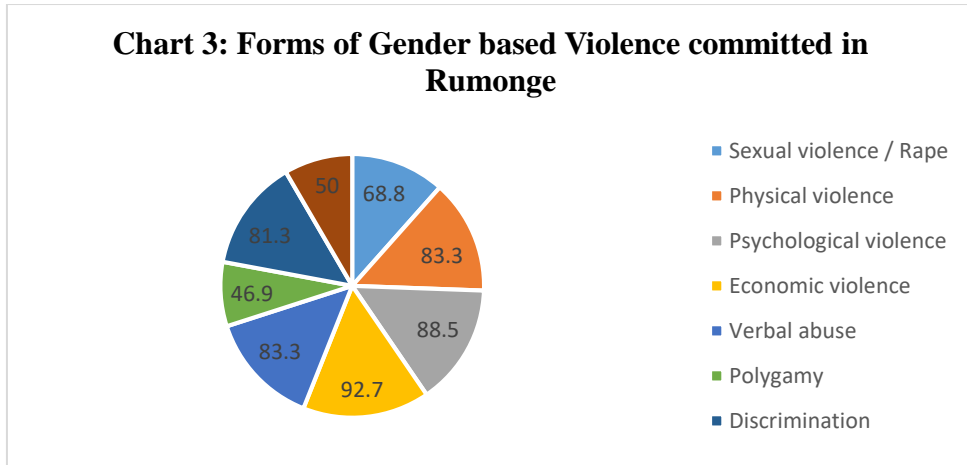
Most of the respondents were farmers. 65.2% of the respondents indicated that their occupation was farming, 13.1% indicated civil servants, 11.2% indicated trader while 9.1% indicated private actors.

Causes of gender based violence

To better understand the causes of gender based violence, different sub questions have been asked to the respondents including whether really gender based violence is committed in the area, the forms of gender based violence prevailing in the area, the main victims and the setting of gender based violence. In this view, 100% of the respondents acknowledged that gender based violence exists in Rumonge Commune. This match well with the report of Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Development (2011) on Burundi Gender Profile which states that although the Constitution advocates gender equality, discrimination based on gender persists in social practices,

but also at the level of certain legislative texts which still remain governed by custom. Consequently, the main victims of gender based violence are women as found in the study and is deeply and systematically entrenched in patriarchal and cultural attitudes that perpetuate male supremacy, dominance and power, thereby further subordinating women and girls. Behind gender based violence lie cultural and traditional practices that stop women from fulfilling their potential, restrict economic growth and prevent women their full participation in all activities. Murangira (2010), in a view on the current situation regarding sexual violence in Burundi wrote that when it comes to sex, men have higher power than women and there exist certain cultural proverbs and practices in the community that contribute to sexual violence. Examples include, “No one can set limit to the bull”, “if a wife is ill-treated and she returns home, the family just sends her back to her husband, saying“ that is how households are maintained ”,“ practices that oblige young girls to share the room with a male quest ”(p. 7). In addition, the interethnic war that Burundi has undergone during many years has influenced the persistence of gender based violence. Diken and Laustsen (2005) found out that combatants use sexual violence as part of their plans in view of ethnic cleansing and therefore rape many women. This weapon of war is strategically deployed in most cases as a form of benefit for victorious commanders and their troops or a means of social bonding between the combatants. It is also seen as a form of punishment for opposing groups and a way of humiliating the male opponents as they are reminded of their inability to protect their women (p. 69). Even in post conflict, Zicherman (2007), in his review *Addressing sexual violence in postconflict Burundi*, indicates that women and girls continue to suffer high levels of sexual violence. This is as a result of the return of displaced persons and ex-combatants, high prevalence of female headed households, lack of economic opportunities and break down of social norms. He further states that the perpetrators of sexual attacks on women have shifted from rebels and military staff to extended family members, household domestic staff and teachers. He added that women household heads with no older sons tend to be prone to sexual attacks, while officials demand sex as payment for assistance and food. Poor families push their young daughters into marriages in fear of them being raped, but this however increases the chances of being vulnerable and sexually violated by their husbands (p. 77).

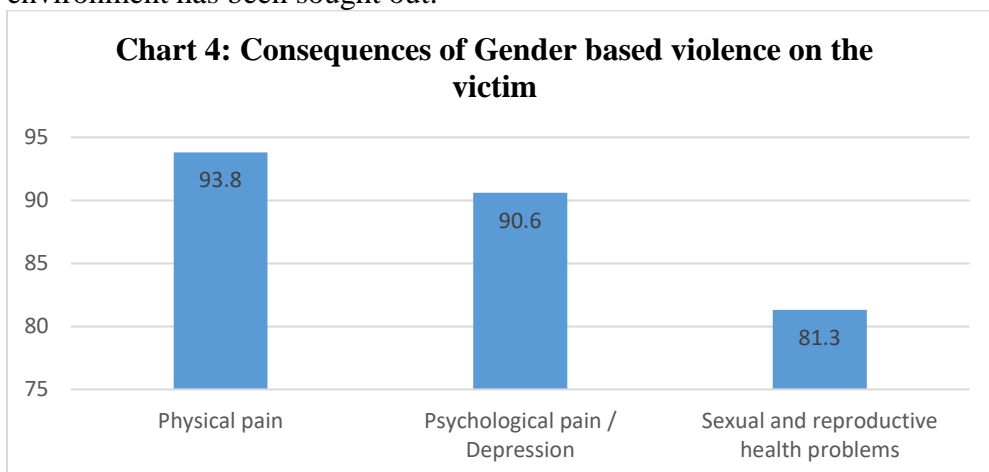
Gender based violence is manifested in different forms with the following as most current in Rumonge:



Eight forms of gender based violence have been noted ranging from Economic violence, Psychological violence, Verbal abuse, Physical violence, Discrimination, Sexual violence, forced marriages, and Polygamy. All forms noted in this study negatively impact on development of the community. The findings are consistent with other gender based violence studies. Brookes et al (2001) found that while rape and other forms of sexual assault may be among the more severe forms of gender based violence, physical, economic and verbal harassment or bullying are most prevalent (p. 24)

Living Conditions of Gender based Victims

An overview of the life of victims in both her life and her environment has been sought out.



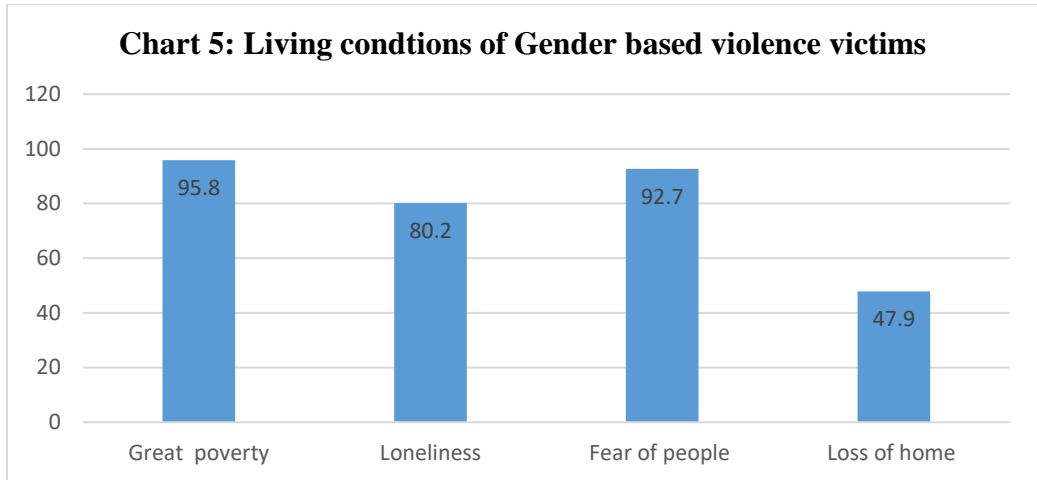
From the above findings, gender based victim suffer from a range of consequences including physical pain (immediate injuries such as

fractures and hemorrhaging, and long-term physical conditions such as gastrointestinal, central nervous system disorders, chronic pain); psychological pain including mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, attempted suicide. Overall reduced or lost educational, employment, social, early marriages, high school drop outs or political participation opportunities. An outstanding consequence of gender based violence on the victim is sexual and reproductive health problems, such as sexually transmitted infections (including HIV), and other chronic conditions; sexual dysfunction; unintended/unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion, miscarriages, stillbirth and abortion, premature labor and low birth weight, risks to maternal and fetal health especially in cases of abuse during pregnancy. Beyond the direct and short-term consequences, child witnesses of violence are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems, perform poorly in school and be at risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence in the future. Businesses and employers can incur financial losses on account of absences due to the health consequences inhibiting the survivor from working; incarceration of the perpetrator; and expenses related to additional security measures that might be needed in the workplace. (Bott et al.2005; TC-TAT 2008; UN General Assembly 2006; Walby 2004)

From these findings we deduce that gender based violence have great impact on the victim. The World Bank report estimates that violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 44 is responsible for more deaths and cases of sickness worldwide than cancer, road traffic accidents and malaria put together. Gender based violence has long lasting adverse consequences for women's reproductive health. These include unwanted pregnancies, pregnancy complications, maternal death, miscarriage, injury and sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV and AIDS (Baumgarten I. 2003). Women who experience sexual violence during pregnancy have the high tendency of experiencing miscarriages and fetal loss. In cases where these children survive, they are born prematurely and/or underweight. It also leads to maternal mortality and it has been documented that children who lose their mothers do not develop well. There are also serious mental health problems including depression, anxiety, suicidal thought, illicit drug use and post-traumatic stress disorders (Bryant-Davis et al., 2010).

Living conditions of gender based violence victims

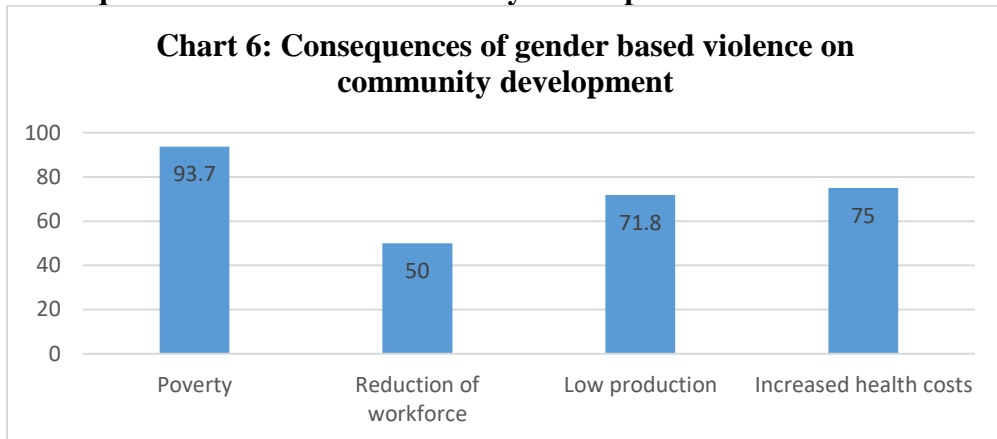
Gender based violence does not only impact negatively their life but also their living conditions. The chart below show how victims live:



Gender based violence victims carry out a miserable life characterized by poverty, loneliness and fear. 92 respondents out of 96, i.e. 95.8% said that victims live in great poverty. 46 respondents out of 96, i.e. 47,9% said that they are homeless. 77 respondents out of 96, i.e. 80,2% said that they are lonely. 89 respondents out of 96, i.e. 92,7% said that they live in fear of men.

These findings match with the findings of Solange Mukamana and Denise Niyonizigiye (2014) in their article about *Breaking the silence: A needs assessment of survivors of sexual violence in Burundi*, where they found that survivors of gender based violence live in poverty, constant fear, Shame and loss of self-esteem, unhappiness, resentment and homeless because of family breakdown. Besides, UNFPA reports that gender based violence has acute physical, psychological and social consequences. Victims often experience psychological trauma which ranges from depression, terror, guilt, shame to loss of self-esteem (UNFPA 2015). They may be rejected by spouses and families, ostracized, subjected to further exploitation or to punishment. They may also suffer from unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual dysfunction and chronic infections leading to pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility.

Consequences of GBV on Community Development



From the findings in the above table, 90 respondents out of 96, i.e. 93.7% said that gender based violence causes poverty in the community. 48 respondents out of 96, i.e. 50% revealed a reduction of workforce. 69 respondents out of 96, i.e. 71.8% revealed a low production while 72 respondents out of 96, i.e. 75% revealed increased health costs.

Human development is a development paradigm that goes beyond the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests. Therefore, people are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. The expansion of such choices cannot be achieved if there is an un-enabling environment such as that which is characterized by gender based violence. Gender based violence therefore affects development as it hinders women to achieve their full potential.

In view of this, gender based violence is a handicap to community development. The USAID (2012) gender equality and female empowerment policy states that gender-based violence is a constraint to individual and societal development, as women who experience violence are less likely to earn a living and be able to care for their children. As a result violence in the home, for example, is often not spoken about and victims that include women and children do not receive adequate support for prevention and recovery. This further increase their risk to male domination and suppression as most patriachs withdraw financial support to the wife or partner, marry off young girls or deny them access to education, preferring to send boys (p. 7).

Gender based violence has significant economic costs in terms of expenditures on service provision, lost income for women and their families, decreased productivity, and negative impacts on future human capital

formation as according to Moser and Van Bronkhorst (1999), violence erodes:

- Labor as an asset when it limits access to jobs;
- Human Capital as an asset when it limits access to education and health facilities by both users and providers;
- Social Capital as an asset when it reduces trust and cooperation between community-level social organizations;
- Household relations as an asset when it limits the capacity of households to function effectively as a unit;

Productive assets when it destroys housing - the urban poor's most productive asset (p. 85). Morrison, Buvinic and Shifter (2003) classified the socio-economic of costs of violence as follows:

Table 4. Socio economic costs

Direct monetary costs	Value of goods and services used in treating or preventing violence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police, - Criminal justice system - Medical - Psychological counseling - Damage to physical infrastructure (housing etc.) - Social services
Non-monetary costs	Pain and suffering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased morbidity - Increased mortality via homicide and suicide - Abuse of alcohol and drugs - Depressive disorders
Economic multiply effects	Macroeconomic, labor market, intergenerational productivity effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decreased labor market participation - Reduced productivity on the job - Lower earnings - Increased absenteeism - Intergenerational productivity impacts via grade repetition and lower educational attainment of children - Decreased investment and savings - Capital flight - Decreased tourism - Decreased government revenue - Impact on policy-making by distorting government spending

Results discussion

This study sought to establish the impact of gender based violence on community development by studying the case of Rumonge Commune which included a sample of 96 heads of households from six zones making

up Rumonge commune namely Buruhukiro, Gatete, Kigwena, Kizuka, Minago and Rumonge.

Gender based violence is a real problem in the six zones of Rumonge Commune. The statistics got from Family and Community Development Center of Rumonge shows that, the way to fight against gender based violence is still long. From July 2020 to December 2020, Family and Community Development Center of Rumonge has recorded 246 cases of gender based violence apart from what has not been recorded. The main victims are women and girls. Women undergo a range of violence including sexual violence, intimate partner or spouse abuse (domestic violence), emotional and psychological abuse, sex trafficking, forced prostitution, sexual exploitation, sexual and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, harmful traditional practices for example female beating, forced marriage and discriminatory practices based on gender, refusal of children, lack of access to family resources by women and economic violence. These acts originated in the image and role assigned to women by Burundian culture and tradition which set women at the lowest stage while depending on men.

These results are similar to the findings of Roxanna (1992) as she states that Gender based violence finds origins from many things, among which the dependence of women on men. Rosanna stated that the socially dependency of women on men is key to understanding women's vulnerability to violence. This dependency is frequently economic, and is of various layers of discrimination. Much of women's work is unpaid labour at home and in the field which is not valued by the society nor calculated as part of the GNP or productive work of a nation. Women are trained to believe that their value is attached to the men in their lives-fathers, brothers, and sons-and often they are socially ostracized if they displease or disobey them (p.11).

Gender based violence happens in different location, that is, at home (Domestic violence), at work place, at school, in church and family. The study established that gender based violence is revealed in different forms such as physical, economical, psychological, Sexual violence / Rape, Forced marriages , Discrimination, Verbal abuse and Polygamy. In addition, all the six zonal chiefs acknowledged the existence of Gender based violence in their respective zones, agreed that the education of children, especially boys, culture of silence and that victims who break that silence are in most cases blamed and treated as outcasts in their families, Illegal marriage, low socioeconomic status of women and unemployment are key influencing factor of gender based violence.

These results meet with the finding of Navindhra Naidoo (2017) where he stated that common manifestation of gender based violence is

domestic violence (inclusive of family violence and intimate partner violence. Girls and young women often experience violence at home, from physical punishment to sexual, emotional or psychological violence. School and the journey to it can also be a place where girls experience violence, from sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation (P.22).

In this paper, the results show that all these forms of violence perpetrated on women in Rumonge commune are mostly caused by culture and tradition, ignorance, impunity of perpetrators, drugs/Alcohol and poverty. Culture preaches, admonishes, eggs on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them at all. Culture condition one's perception of reality, blocking out information inconsistent with its assumptions and placing sometimes inaccurate meaning on the other party's words or actions.

These results coincides with what Wood and Jewkes (1997) indicated that the causes of violence against women in African societies stem from patriarchal control which either preserves or extends gender inequality. Again, the economic and financial dependence of most women on their husbands make them vulnerable to sexual violence (p.41).

Gender based violence has negative consequences on both the victim and her living conditions and the community development as well. These include physical pain, psychological pain / depression, sexually transmissible diseases, unwanted pregnancies, suicidal thoughts and behavior and death on one hand. On the other hand, gender based violence on the victim's living conditions include great poverty, loss home, Loneliness, and living in fear of people, especially men. Tsitsi Marylin Dzinavane (2016), align with these findings when stating that gender based violence has negative consequences on women that include: Low self-esteem and confidence for most women once abused, have low self-esteem and fail to assert themselves and have no confidence to leave abusive relationships; Sexual and reproductive issues fort gender-based violence affects women more, as they have challenges with, for example, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and forced abortions. It is more devastating for a woman to take care of a child who came from an incident of rape; Limits time needed for productive issues for women who are in abusive relationships at times miss work so that they attend to injuries, court cases or due to emotional stress (p.124).

In an agricultural country like Burundi where the main force in this sector is made of women, this workforce has to be supported, strengthened and cared for so that it may stay in good conditions and be more productive. As far as the research's contribution is concerned, the study found that there should be organized community dialogues where men and women should be taught about the laws regarding families, gender norms and development.

Women's low status and economic dependence on men is a key influencing gender based violence. It is imperative to empower women economically for any development to happen. The study established also that children should be educated that boys and girls have the same rights and gender based violence perpetrators should be severely punished. Considering ignorance, non-respect and/or ignorance of laws regarding families, and poverty as main causes, the sensitization of the community on laws regarding families and gender based violence should be promoted as well as the reduction of the cost of access to justice as any victims had to have a legal justice assistant, reviewing the lawyers' fees and establish a law governing inheritance in order to counteract gender based violence.

Same results were found by Tsitsi Marylin Dzinavane (2016), who said that in order to counteract gender based violence, there is a need: to promote the education and economic empowerment of women and girls; to raise awareness on laws, structures and systems that support gender-based violence, as this would increase the effectiveness of the law and for the government to provide more resources for improved service provision, especially to reduce the risk of pregnancy and HIV infection (p.122).

In addition, programs should be taken and implemented to remove poverty. These include: Seminars and many other public awakening programs which can be taken to change the attitude of society towards women, laws regarding gender based violence that must be strengthened and implemented properly, Government and non-government organization programs to prevent violence against women should work more effectively and dynamically , round table conference among students, teachers and guardians of schools, colleges and university should be arranged to take consultation from each other to prevent gender based violence and implement and follow the international conventions on eliminating violence against women. The community leaders, religious leaders and teachers in the community must take gender based violence as a challenge and set examples for the community to follow by welcoming gender based violence victims and showing them love and support. Perpetrators of sexual violence who are caught must be prosecuted and it must be ensured that they serve the full term of the offense to serve as a deterrent to others. The population should report all cases and seek support and health and security personnel must undergo intensive training to handle the incidence with higher level of expertise and professionalism.

This match well with the conclusions of a study of the Secretary General by United Nations (2006) which states that violence against women is a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. It causes untold misery, cutting short lives and leaving countless women living in pain and fear in every country in the world. It harms families across the generations,

impoverishes communities and reinforces other forms of violence throughout societies. Violence against women stops them from fulfilling their potential, restricts economic growth and undermines development. The scope and extent of violence against women are a reflection of the degree and persistence of discrimination that women continue to face. It can only be eliminated, therefore, by addressing discrimination, promoting women's equality and empowerment, and ensuring that women's human rights are fulfilled.

Conclusion

This paper contributed to the understanding of the reasons behind the persistence of gender based violence and not only its implications on the bad living conditions of families, but also its impact on community development in Rumonge commune. It has been revealed that gender based violence is a serious problem that affects the lives of women and consequently children, families and community as a whole and is an obstacle to development of the community in Rumonge as well in Burundi. It is a serious reproductive, psychological and physical health issue.

The paper highlighted that impacts of Gender based violence becomes a cycle that affects the entire community and nations from one generation to the other. Gender based violence against women has far-reaching consequences for women, their children, and society as a whole as found in the study. Women who experience violence suffer a range of health problems, and their ability to earn a living and to participate in public life is diminished. Their children are significantly more at risk of health problems, poor school performance and behavioral disturbances. Gender based violence further impoverishes women, their families, community and nation. It lowers economic production, drains resources from public services and employers, and reduces human capital formation.

To cope up with the impacts of gender based violence, more emphasis must be placed on education and awareness of the impacts and ways to prevent it. Perpetrators must be properly prosecuted and victims must be provided with all the needed resources for treatment and judicial processes. Gender based violence must be handled with all seriousness.

In general, this study has identified that gender based violence is a health, economic, and social problem and an obstacle to development of the community. The findings show a pressing need for the government and other actors to initiate far-reaching reforms in the implementation of their actions against gender based violence for community full development attainment.

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