

# Intimate Partner Violence in Emergency Situation, Lessons from Lango Sub-Region, Northern Uganda, Implications for Future Marriage Partnership

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## Abstract

This paper examines the implications of intimate Partner violence (IPV) on marriage relationships in emergency situation taking a case of the post covid-19 pandemic in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda. The paper brings forth the emerging evidence of victims of intimate partner violence, opinions of key stakeholders and analysis of North Kyoga Police records on cases related to intimate partner violence from the nine districts that make up Lango sub-region in northern Uganda. Qualitative research approach was employed to generate data from personal experience, interviews and review of Police crime records on Gender-based and intimate partner violence between 2020-2023. Analysis was guided by the gendercide and femicide theories. The findings indicate that intimate partner violence existed in the pre and post covid-19 period. However, regardless of gender, both men and women alike suffered violence in marriage relationship. Thus, IPV in Lango sub-region seemed a perennial vice among couples which manifested severely in the forms of physical injuries, emotional, suicide and murder in extreme cases. The significant causes of the IPV consisted of proximity between couples and family members, economic insecurity, parental meddling in couple's affairs, culture, patriarchy, infidelity and loss of trust and suspicion. Intimate partner violence had negative implications on future marriage partnership especially with the rise in mariticide that juxtaposed the femicide ideology of female vulnerability in marriage relationships. Intimate partner violence has dire consequences on couples' life, health, marriage and social and economic costs. Thus, this paper contributes a new dimension to the application of gendercide and femicide theories in emergency situation and informs interventions to protect vulnerable men in marriage partnerships.

**Keywords:** Emergency, Intimate Partner, Marriage Partnership, Northern Uganda, Violence

## Introduction

Intimate partner violence refers to the physical, emotional, sexual, psychological harm inflicted on an individual by a spouse or a marriage partner. This form of violence violates human rights and inflicts pain on an individual. Most studies indicate that partner violence are often gender-based and frequently occur in homes (Buss, David, and Joshua & Duntley, 2011). Gender based violence (GBV) is a global pandemic that affects 1 in 3 females in their lifetime (Javed & Chattu, 2021) and is a persistent form of human rights violation. GBV and women abuse by men in intimate/ marriage relationships have been named differently by feminist scholars- wife battering (Dobash & Dobash, 1979), incest (Armstrong, 1978) and sexual

harassment (MacKinnon & MacKinnon, 1979). This process of exposing women's experiences in violent relationship and identifying abuse has continued up to recent work on, for example, technology-facilitated sexual violence (Henry & Powell, 2015). This paper however focuses on domestic violence among intimate partners other than technology abuse. Stewart, et. al' (2013) argue that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is an underrecognized problem in society yet can have an enormous impact on the physical, social and mental health and well-being of women, men, and children. IPV also has links to risky health behaviours, such as alcohol and other substance abuse. IPV is a major public health and social problem globally that results in significant personal, health, economic, and social costs. This paper focuses on the implications of IPV on the future marriage partnerships of men and women in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda.

Statistics indicate that 35 percent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. Globally, seven percent of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner and as many as 38 percent of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner (Dlamini, 2021). Manjoo argues that GBV is manifested through a multitude of actions, including forced marriage of young girls, trafficking-in persons, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), female infanticide, male rape, seclusion, violence directed at lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals, sexual violence, verbal abuse and laws and regulations that limit women's and girls' rights and access to services in relation to men (Manjoo 2011). These practices are not only violations of the human rights of the individuals affected, but are also an instrumentalist approach to sustain the status quo and the hierarchy of gender identities. Women living in poverty are particularly more vulnerable, as they face high levels of structural violence, including difficulty in accessing health and legal services needed to address the effects of interpersonal violence. Northern Uganda has suffered a series of violence conflict that displaced over 1.8 million people into internally displaced people's camps (Dolan, 2009; Okello & Hovil, 2007). Conflict had pervasive impact on the population including gender-related crimes that affected men and women alike.

The concept of 'marriage partnership' in African philosophy is that it is the origin of life and it takes place between two opposite sex and the fundamental purpose is procreation (Sabure 2009). In African culture and Uganda context specifically, marriage is understood as a union and bond between two people of the opposite sex (Mawere & Mawere 2010; Marriage; Uganda and Divorce Bill, 2018). This paper analyses marriage partnership as a conjugal union between two adult opposite sex embedded in a foundation for family structure that is the basic unit of society.

In this paper, I take a closer examination at marriage relations and GBV among intimate partners and the implications it has for future marriage partnerships. Intimate partner violence is pervasive, starts early and traverses through individuals' lifetime. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2017), nearly 1 in 4 adult women and approximately 1 in 7 adult men report having experienced severe physical violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime. Similarly, 16 percent of women and 7 percent of men have experienced sexual violence from an intimate partner (this includes rape, being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, and/or unwanted sexual contact) while, 10 percent of women and 2 percent of men report having been stalked by an intimate partner.

Previous studies on GBV in Africa basically situated spousal violence in patriarchal system of societies and family structure (Sathiparsad, Taylor, & Dlamini, 2008). In fact, family structure was identified as a risk factor behind intimate partner violence. Patriarchy thus places women in subordinate positions making them susceptible to structural and ideological discrimination thus, violence was often used by men as a

means to control women and children. Given the high poverty levels, caused by prolonged conflict, displacement the Covid-19 lockdown and related increases in unemployment and economic insecurity in northern Uganda, it is no surprise that GBV increased among couples which effect manifests to date. This paper thus, brings forth the voices, experiences and cases of spouses in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda in regard to intimate partner violence as a fundamental factor that influences opinions, perceptions and policies on future marriages in Uganda.

### **The problem statement**

Domestic and intimate partner violence became a glaring social problem in Lango sub-region northern Uganda. Data from police records indicate that at least 1,180 cases of domestic violence were registered in the Lango sub-region in a span of just eight months in 2020. A total of 729 cases of intimate partner assault were registered in three months, topping the list of offences committed in the area. The police crime report for January to March 2021 showed that domestic violence came second with 338 cases. The rising cases shocked Lango, prompting debate about increasing domestic violence in the region that is made up of nine districts, one city and a Municipality. The administrative units include Oyam, Apac, Kwania, Amolatar, Kole, Dokolo, Alebtong, Otuke and Lira. This study was thus driven by the rising statistics on intimate partner and domestic violence cases with intent of investigating the underlying causes of such violence and the implications for future marriage relations in Lango sub-region.

### **Materials and Methods**

This paper takes a qualitative research paradigm and case study design. The paper offers a continuum thinking from gender and feminist theories by Corradi, Marcuello-Servós, Boira, & Weil, (2016) and Shaw (2017). The continuum thinking encapsulates the abuse experienced by couples in marriage relationship. The femicide theory is relevant in highlighting the gender specific abuse directed to women in patriarchal societies through social and political constructions of male dominance. The gendercide theory advanced by Boyle (2019) is relevant in examining the genocidal targeting of men as vulnerable subjects in marriage relationship. Gendercide is further relevant in examining the sexual violence against men and the hegemonic masculinity. The gender and feminist theories thus provide a guide to interventions on GBV among couples in close proximity drawing from couple's experiences in northern Uganda. Cases were drawn from across the nine districts in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda and data were generated primarily from the victims of GVB and informed by opinion leaders and document reviews on cases of GBV in Lango sub-region recorded by Uganda Police between 2020-2023. The paper is guided by the following questions; 1) What experiences do intimate partners have on gender-based violence? and 2) what imaginations do victims of intimate partners' violence have on future marriage partnerships in northern Uganda amidst the escalating GBV rates?

### **Results**

This section contains the findings generated from interviews and cases extracted from the north Kyoga regional police records on gender-based and intimate partner crimes between 202-2023. Specifically, this paper focused on intimate partner violence data. Intimate Partner violence (IPV) remains a silent phenomenon yet inflicts pain on the victim. Intimate partner violence is interpreted as sexual ferocity that plays on gender norms and gender exclusions to break down spousal relationships. The findings are presented in different cases reflecting the underlying causes of violence among couples between 2020-

2023. The common cases of violence and the imaginations of future marriage partnerships were herewith presented.

Records from North Kyoga police region in Uganda which covers the entire Lango sub-region showed that 92 murder cases were reported between January and May in 2021. In January alone, police registered 20 murder cases, 19 in February, 17 in March, 20 in April and 16 in May. Below are some of the intimate partner violence cases recorded.

### ***Case 1: The tale of a religious Leader aged 36 married in Church***

I met my partner during my high school. I was in senior four when we started dating, later we lost contact but God reunited us. Unfortunately, my fiancé then had had a child with another man. Since I loved her, I still accepted her back into my life.

I forgave her and we resumed the relationship but did not have any sexual intercourse given the nature of the course I was pursuing (theology). I was undertaking a pastoral course and the ideal is to get fully married in church before beginning to live together as husband and wife. I have hated this kind of arrangement and I urge young people to take time and study their potential partners in-depth before making a 'life vow.'

***Why that statement?*** You know, there are many challenges in marriage and I'm already a victim. ***Please tell me more.*** My wife has proved a chronic headache to me, she takes on her mother's advice more than me, who is her husband. During the first lockdown phase of March 2020, her mother called her back and for the six months of the lockdown, I had to stay alone with the children. When I called her to return home, her answer was, transport is a problem. Second, social distancing should be maintained this time of Covid-19. I asked her, why in the first place did you choose to leave your matrimonial home during this crisis? Do you mean you got married to your mother.....? This was of course a lamentation that ought to have not been mentioned by the clergy.

In one of the cases encountered, proximity among couples was one of the causes of violence among couples. Seemingly a number of couples did not have ample time to live together with their partners in normalcy. However, the outbreak of covid-19 and the subsequent closure of the economy in March 2020-2021 brought partners into close proximity to understand each other better.

### ***Case 2: Spousal character in confinement***

Covid-19 exposed the true character of couples. Prior to this period, individuals took up different economic life and hardly had any opportunity to study each other holistically into details. In fact, some parents had transferred the parenting roles to housemaids. Thanks to covid lockdown, this pandemic provided an opportunity for couples to stay together, moreover idle and with restricted movement. The weird characters were explicitly exposed as the phased lockdown continued. Some couples found the partners characters unbearable thus leading to violence.

### ***Case 3:***

In another conversation with a married man, I discovered this:

For the first time I realized my wife is such a careless woman that does not maintain household hygiene. As if that is not bad enough, she beats children like prisoners which did not go well with me. Her use of abusive words against my own children did not please me at all. This is a character have never noticed for

the 13 years we have been in marriage. In fact, the lock down of 2020 was an equivalent of 10 years to me due to the hardship I experience.

#### **Case 4**

In a related case, an incidence recorded by North Kyoga Police revealed a female perpetrator of GBV whom I called 'Alice' killed her husband by pulling his private part under unclear circumstance during the lockdown. The couple hailed from Alebtong district but then resided in Lira City. The husband was a long-distance truck driver who traversed the East African region transporting goods and services. Alice 43-years-old, a mother of five engaged the husband in a domestic feud upon his return home from duty in June 2021. The quarrels ended up in what was legally summed as manslaughter and the perpetrator was sentenced to a 14-year imprisonment term in Erute prison, Lira district.

One of the elders interviewed explained that:

'Couples are persons with different background and were not at one time raised together. Thus, the difference in behaviour is common place and likely to invoke disagreement and conflict that when not timely handled can cause frustration and escalate into violence' (interview with an elder, Lango Cultural Foundation).

The excerpt reveals the difference in personality of the spouses as one of the factors responsible for violence among intimate partners.

#### **Case 5**

In another recorded Police case, a mother of four in Inomo sub-county Kwania district suspected to have brutally killed the husband, chopped his neck and private part and kept the body under their matrimonial bed for three days. It was not until the body begun to decompose that the neighbours became concerned and solicited the police support to investigate the whereabouts of the missing man.

The circumstance under which the woman killed her husband to the extent of chooping of his neck and private parts remained unclear as per the Police records.

#### **Case 6**

In a close interview with one CID whom I pseudonym KI C shared the case of a purported suicide case of a woman in Lira City East Division, Lira City on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. It was an early morning when the neighbours woke up to their shock to find a mother of three, a Social Worker hanged dangling on a mango tree in what was called a self- suicide. The Police were urgently called to the scene to establish the cause of the shocking death. After thorough investigation, KI C stated that:

This was not a suicide case, the husband a Primary School teacher in Kiryandongo district basically killed his wife in an ensured fight. Evidences at the scene are explicit. One of the children aged 15 (minor) reported quarrels between the parents in the wee hours of the night on that fateful night. Investigations further revealed that the husband of the victim (a Social Worker with one of the prominent organisations in Lira City) had confiscated the deceased Automated Machine (ATM) card and withdrew undisclosed amount of money from her bank account raising concern from the account holder. This was the source of the problem between the couple.

#### **Case 7**

In a related case that ended into death, the North Kyoga Police records revealed that:

'In March 17 2021, a shocking incidence occurred in Agwata sub-county, Dokolo district. One of the cohabiting couples went missing for days. A mother of four children, a widow and food vendor but cohabiting with another man was found half-buried behind her house. Arrests were made upon suspicion. In what seemed to become true, a spouse to the deceased was one of the suspects and either under duress or otherwise confessed to committing the crime with a co-accused. Further investigations revealed the deceased had lost unspecified amount of money within the incidence period...'

The changing economic trend coupled with the two-time lockdown in Uganda limited most men from fending for their households. In another case that happened in Ogur sub-county Lira district one of the interlocutors attested:

Some husbands became economically helpless during the three-phased lockdown that we experienced. One of the incidences here, a married man eloped with another woman abandoning his wife with two children. On the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021, the wife followed him to his home in new partnership demanding for support for self and the children. The husband reiterated by beating up the official wife. Consequently, the wife returned home in anger and instead killed her two children and committed suicide hence leaving the family in shambles.

An important point to note from this kind of action is patriarchy, power hierarchy and shunning economic responsibility.

### *Case 8*

In Kwania, a woman and her two children were in custody at Kwania Central Police Station following the death of her husband, Martin Adoli. It was reported that the 48-year-old went missing on Monday last week. But on Thursday, his body was discovered in his house covered with a bedsheet, with injuries on his manhood and the rest of the body. Mr. Moses Opio, the Gweri Village chairperson, said the deceased had a misunderstanding with his family over a cow which was sold without his knowledge.

The deceased's sons connived with their mother and sold a cow which was paid to the family in form of dowry and when Adoli asked for the proceeds, his wife said they were going to build a house for him but shockingly, he was later found dead in the house,' Mr Opio said.

'His children wanted to bury the body but I stopped them and reported the matter to police, leading to their arrest.' Mr. Opio said the deceased had separated with his wife for about 20 years over domestic violence. However, he said the woman reunited with her family three years ago. 'The man separated with this woman but his clan forced him to bring back the woman to take care of the family, but there had been no peace between them,' Mr. Opio added. Ms. Edith Basalirwa, the Kwania District Police Commander, confirmed the arrest of three suspects but did not divulge any details.

In this particular case, I see that culture aggravated the GBV and IPV in Lango. The fact that the couple had separated for over 20 years implied they could no longer sustain the marriage. Amidst the already precarious situation, the clan reunited the coupled thus ending in loss of life.

One of the Informants attested to couples' change in sexual behaviours during confinement:

Traditionally and biblically, a woman was created from a man's ribs meaning she has to submit to her husband. After the payment of bride-wealth, she has no control over her sexual rights and has to comply whenever her husband needs to have sex (interview with a male elder, Aduku, Kwania district).

Seemingly, religion and culture play significant roles in shaping the sexual life of spouses. Both tradition and religion construct spousal roles that could sustain or destroy marriage relations depending on the interpretations and perceptions.

### *Stakeholders' voices on IPV in Lango sub-region*

The Police in Lango sub-region called upon local leaders to help mitigate crime rates in the region. Jimmy Patrick Okema, the North Kyoga Regional Police Spokesperson was worried that murder was becoming common in the sub-region despite their efforts to curb the vice. Okema appealed to all stakeholders especially cultural and religious leaders to take the mantle of preaching against the vice so that peace could prevail.

“We need to involve all stakeholders like religious and cultural leaders. Even the head of the family and clan must get involved especially when it is a domestic violence case before someone dies. “The local leaders should help us in identifying the culprits so that the law handles them.” Okema said.

James Ajal, the Prime Minister of Lango Cultural Foundation attributed the vice to mental instability brought about the lockdown. Ajal who cited a communication gap between the leaders and the local community said Lango cultural institution was using its structures to reach out to its people. Similarly, Cyprian Ocen, the coordinator Justice and Peace Commission under Lira Catholic Diocese explained that the people of Lango had lost hope due to abject poverty and reduction in both education and moral levels. According to Ocen, the issues of human rights were partly to blame for the current rise in crime rates. Ocen believed that with community sensitization, dialogues and economic empowerment, the situation could change for the better.

Some political leaders in Lango believed that IPV vice had been brought about by the lockdown whereas others blamed it on moral decay among the people of Lango. Linda Agnes Auma, the Lira District Woman Member of Parliament attributed the rise in the number of murder cases to domestic violence. She was however quick to note that local leaders were frustrating their efforts of ensuring that murder suspects were arrested and prosecuted by either concealing details of the suspects or aiding them to disappear.

Mr. Okema finally advised couples to exercise self-control in the face of violence especially now that they had to live with each forever.

### **Discussion**

Globally, the violent outcome of Covid-19 emergency lockdown had been recorded and Uganda was not an exceptional case. Baral (2021) notes that forced cohabitation during lock-down triggered violence against women and children. She linked GBV linked to dominance, power and abuse of authority or any calamity, be it a pandemic, conflict, a disaster or cultural norms. While, IPV existed in the pre covid-19 period, there were evidences that covid-19 exacerbated the occurrence of violence among couples in Uganda specifically. This study established that all the GBV cases recorded in Lango sub-region occurred in homes and among intimate partners thus confirming studies by Manjoo (2011) on violence among pregnant women as a health risk factor.

From the case of a clergy and his spouse, I pick that this man was a victim of male partner violence who suffered silently. Perhaps the spouse' mother influenced the daughter to behave the way she did. The male spouse suffered psychological torture by his spouse thus resonating with Show's gendercide theory of sexual violence against males and justifying the expression of hegemonic masculinity against common males (Shaw, 2017). This was a case of parental influence on their children's marriage relations that fueled tension between couples. In Lango culture, it is common place for a daughter to take on the mothers' advice than the husband's. The lived experience of this ordained clergy creates uncertainty on future marriage relations especially church marriage as a lifelong commitment.

The findings indicate that couples did not have sufficient time to study their partners' personality due to the distant economic activities they engaged in that enlarged their proximity. My finding conforms with Tsur & Hisham (2020) who established that Covid-19 were associated with fear and stress among couples who experienced trauma during the lockdown. The findings further reveal that those who suffer from complex posttraumatic disorder were at higher risk of reacting when faced with stressful life-events. The case of a woman in Ogur who poisoned her own children and committed suicide in reaction to the husband's maltreatment can attest to this finding. Further it was probable that the case of Alice as a GBV perpetrator in Lira City could have previously suffered from posttraumatic disorders since the husband was a long-distant truck driver who did not have ample time to live with the wife in normalcy. Thus, living together during the lockdown could have triggered the misunderstanding between this spouse. Although serving the murder sentence, further investigation into Alice's mental status would be worthwhile as a long-term measure to address IPV before it escalates into murder.

Drawing from Corradi, Marcuello-Servós, Boira, & Weil, (2016) and Shaw (2017) femicide theory, intimate-partner violence in Lango sub-region was linked to dominance, power and abuse of authority though other factors like covid-19 merely exacerbated it. Thus, an outbreak of an epidemic intensified the pre-existing gendered structural inequalities and power hierarchies which in this case left more men than women and girls more vulnerable than before. Contrary in Lango culture, power and decision-making rights give greater access to, and control over resources to men than to women. The significance of patriarchy in Lango calls for policy intervention to challenge the perpetual gender inequality and incorporation of men as change agents thus resonating Javed & Chattu (2021). The power imbalance and control over resources and decisions are institutionalized through the laws, policies and regulations of formal social institutions. Boyle (2019) ascertains the inter-relationship between gender and violence. Lango culture just like most African social settings is patriarchal and power and household decision-makings lie with the husband. Unfortunately, the inequality in the resource control often ends up with violence between spouses. Thus, patriarchy moderated by unequal power relations, and the payment of bride-wealth exacerbated intimate partner violence in Lango sub-region.

While distant intimacy was the norm in the pre lockdown era, proximity became ambivalent: 'a source of comfort and safety during lockdown, but ... equally ... a source of danger' (Besnier, 2015:109; Baral 2021). Under the pandemic, novel configurations of trust emerged, informed by a predicament of forced distancing and, simultaneously, forced cohabitation. Since movements were restricted during the lockdown period, couples in bitter relationships had no option but to stay closure to their partners. Nonetheless, the experience of covid-19 and the associated perceptions and reactions can vary from individual to individual. The case of a wife to the long distant truck driver who pulled the husband's private part to death can attest to the outcome of forced proximity in an emergency situation exacerbated by the Covid-19 lockdown. To this end, emergency situation can lead to various forms of violence including uncertainty in marriage partnership as opined by Guetto, Vignoli & Bazzani (2021) and psychosocial distress leading to divorce and sometimes killing of spouses.

A number of studies related sexual and gender-based violence to conflict scenario forgetting that such vices occur in marriages as well. Often, there is insufficient knowledge of how victims of intimate partner violence and gender-based violence make sense of and frame their experience with international and local discourses and with categorization of support programme for the victim. Dolan (2016) opines that both men and women in northern Uganda suffered sexual and psychological torture that were gendered in nature during the Lords Resistant Army (LRA) conflict. For the men, the torture of private parts was an



effective method of extracting the information during conflict while for the women and children, they were raped during the conflict as a measure to get out the men from their hide-outs.

Mittal & Singh (2020) alluded to the fact that economic insecurity and excessive alcohol consumption intensified violence among couples during lockdown. Similarly, Baker, Bloom, Davis & Terry (2020) concur that covid-19 induced economic uncertainty globally and increased violence amongst partners. In the particular case in Ogur, the husband simply ignored his fending responsibility by eloping with another partner and used his patriarchal powers to suppress the wife.

The giving of bride-wealth in marriage was identified as one of the underlying factors for IPV in Lango culture. Among Langi marriage is legitimized by the payment of bride-wealth upon negotiation between the bride and the grooms' kins. Shaw (2017), Luciana and Daniel (2020) posit that Gender-based violence is intimately related to patriarchy. The argument on the nexus between patriarchal practice and intimate partner violence is reinforced by Bueno & Henderson (2021), which creates dichotomic structural gender divisions that favor a dominant form of masculinity over women and nonhegemonic gender identities. The stereotypical social construction of hegemonic masculinity builds a narrow relationship with the use of violence against socially subordinated gender identities, including women assigned female roles at birth (Long, et al. 2021). Hegemonic masculinity is also built on a gendered division of labor with a higher recognition of labor outside the home and the invisible marginalization of the reproductive labor exclusively carried out by women. Proximity compounded with patriarchy could have changed the sexual behaviours of partners especially men during the lockdown.

A number of studies link intimate partner violence to economic uncertainties. Globally and in Uganda specifically, quite a number of adults lost their livelihoods during and in the post-Covid 19 era as thousands of suspended employees had to rely on wage guarantee funds, with a substantial reduction of the usual salary. Simultaneously, many workers with temporary contracts lost their job (Alderotti et al. 2020; Baker et al. 2020) thus, couples were exposed to the more pessimistic treatment. Consequently, many people may have anticipated possible job losses due to government restrictions and shrinking household income; factors often viewed as prerequisites for marriage. This may hold especially true for some spouses, who may have reacted more negatively to their partners in terms of marriage intentions. A case scenario in Ireda Shamba Lira City East allude to this statement. In June 2021, the neighbours of a couple I named case 6 woke up in shock to find an immediate neighbour and a mother of three hanging dead on a mango tree in what was described an alleged suicide. Immediately, police from Lira Central Police Station were called to the scene to investigate into the cause of the very shocking event that perplexed everyone in the neighbourhood. Investigations emerged that violence erupted over the husband's overdraw of the wife's account indicating the man's economic vulnerability.

Relatedly, from the excerpt of Dokolo case I draw two important points; economic constraints and mistrust among the couple triggered the violence. Literature indicates that the Labour market precariousness is often gendered, with women more exposed to employment uncertainties such as holding low paid jobs than men. This situation has been found to be particularly detrimental for women's family plans in Italy (Alderoth et al. 2020). The cases in Ireda Shamba, Lira City and Agwata in Dokolo district were quite unique with male partners presented as economically more vulnerable than their spouses. Given the long-term socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty would likely to be an important aspect in shaping marriage partnerships in the years to come particularly with the changing economic trend. It is also probable that economic change induced the uncertainty, mistrust and suspicion among couples thus exacerbating violence and jeopardizing future marriage partnership. In the Dokolo

district case, there were still unclear circumstances under which a male spouse allegedly killed the wife and disappeared with unspecified sum of money. Nonetheless, the fact that the perpetrator picked money from the victim raises concern over economic hardship.

Patriarchy is inherent in Lango culture and religion just like in most African traditions. Dobash & Dobash (1979) and Javed & Chattu (2021) found patriarchy as a trigger for violence against wives. Patriarchy constructs gender roles that present a woman as a husband's property without sexual rights and rights over household assets. This implies that a married Lango woman lacked the agency to make personal and sexual decisions. Referring to case 8 in which Mr. Adoli was purportedly killed by his wife and two children presents Lango culture at the center of IPV. The fact that the victim had separated with the spouse for the past twenty years implied that the couple had failed to sustain their marriage. Contrary, the clan leaders reunited the couple that eventually led to the murder of the male spouse.

### ***Intimate Partner Violence and future marriage partnership***

Studies on partner violence indicate a decline in marriage relations due to the influence such as ideational factors and the rise of post-materialist values and secularization. In fact, Guetto, Vignoli & Bazzani (2021) resonate that cohabitation may be preferred by couples since it is temporary and easily reversible than marriage. Bourdieu (2019) observes that marriage strategies were determined by a combination of the principles of male supremacy and primogeniture and those principles which, tended to rule out marriages between overly unequal families on the basis of an implicit "cost analysis" aimed at maximizing the material and symbolic profit to be derived from the matrimonial transaction within the limits of the family. This finding presents violence in intimate union hence many depicting a decline in future marriage partnerships given the social and economic challenges that come with marriages.

The changing trend in mariticide could have implications for future marriage partnership. Although Corradi, Marcuello-Servós, Boira, & Weil, (2016) and Shaw (2017) in the feminine theory emphasized women abuse, subordination and marginalization in marriage and patriarchy, the mariticide of men in Lango by their wives contradicted the feminist philosophy yet Lango was a patriarchal society. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2017), mariticide made up 30 percent of the total spouse murders in the United States in the 1970s. Data from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s found that for every 100 husbands who killed their wives in the United States, about 75 women killed their husbands indicating a 3:4 ratio of mariticide to uxoricide thus, indicating a changing pattern in intimate partner violence globally. This finding is corroborated by Pirani & Vignoli (2016), Sassler & Lichter (2020) and Tan, O'Hara, Kumar & Chow (2021) on changes in partners' dissatisfaction in marriage partnerships, living conditions and sexual behaviour during the lockdown. Nonetheless, the changing sexual behaviours of partners was not in the scope of this study as it remained private and was not openly reported by the victims nor recorded by the Uganda Police probably due to stigma, cultural taboo, fear and power relations. Thus, further study could be undertaken on sexual behaviours and IPV in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda.

### **Conclusion**

This paper examines intimate partner violence in emergency situations in Lango sub-region, northern Uganda. Findings indicate that regardless of the partner's sex, couples suffered violence silently in marriage relations, which negatively influences individual's perception towards marriage relationships. A number of factors interacted and were moderated by proximity to cause intimate partner violence. The common forms of violence experienced by the victims in Lango sub-region included physical affliction

some of which ended in death, financial, emotional and economic violence. I therefore conclude that no single factor dominated the cause of IPV but rather an interplay of several reasons. The lived experiences of IPV victims and Uganda Police records pointed to individual characters, proximity, alcoholism, conflict, economic and cultural factors as fundamental triggers of IPV. Unfortunately, the IPV negatively influenced imagination for future marriage relations. Indeed, both males and females suffered violence in marriage relations contrarily to the feminist theory that leans towards female maltreatment in patriarchal societies. This paper should contribute to the gendercide and femicide theories to inform intervention for male partners' protection in violent marriages. Thus, pandemics and like the Covid-19 outbreak should not be treated merely as a health matter but as factor that affects all dimensions of life (economic, social and political) hence requiring a holistic intervention.

### Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the financial support accorded to me by the Imagining Gender Futures in Uganda (IMAGENU), a Danida Funded Project. The IMAGENU Project is based in Gulu University Uganda at the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies. The research project started in June 2019 and my sub-project focused on Gender and marriage partnership in Lango sub-region. The project facilitated fieldwork and writing retreats in Uganda and Copenhagen, Denmark. Equally I acknowledge my employer, the Vice Chancellor of Lira University for giving me time out to undertake the study and the writing retreats. Further recognition goes to the North Kyoga Regional Police Office for allowing my research team to access their records on crimes related to GBV and IPV.

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