Everything is not sawa sawa: Abuse and informal employment in Kenya

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**Everything is not sawa sawa: Abuse and informal employment in Kenya**

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Advised by Professor Can Erbil

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**IDEA**

1 IN 5 WOMEN IS A TARGET OF SEXUAL ASSAULT WHILE IN COLLEGE.

Four years isn’t very long + In places where women should be the most empowered... (NIJ 2000)

What about in countries where everyone has fewer resources and women have less agency?

**LITERATURE**

Violence against women – “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life” (UN 1993)

**VIOLANCE AGAINST WOMEN**

*In 1993, the UN General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women provided a framework for action on the pandemic.*

WHY DOES IT HAPPEN? (according to Jacqui True)

1. Gender division of labor
2. Global economy = exploitation of women for cheap labor
3. Masculine-protector and feminine-protected identities associated with war and militarism
4. Male breadwinner and female homemaker identities

DOES EMPLOYMENT LEAD TO VIOLENCE?

- Household bargaining power and “sufferback positions”
- Exposure reduction
- Demand for female labor
- Male unemployment

**VIOLENCE IN KENYA:**

- Husband discipline wives
- What is marital rape?

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**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT:

- If women are 50% of the population, having them work means economies grow (bi-directional relationship with development)
- Increased household income leads to improvements in childhood health

REALITIES:

- Women are more likely than men to work in informal employment (74% of women in SSA)
- 49.1% of working women are in more vulnerable employment

WOMEN AND ABUSE:

- Physical injuries
- PTSD, depression, anxiety
- Withdrawing (and abandonment of children)
- Substance abuse
- Future risky sexual behavior
- Lost productivity
- Effects on children
- “Resource Loss”

**EVIDENCE FROM KENYA**

NAIROBI WOMEN’S HOSPITAL GENDER VIOLENCE RECOVERY CENTER

**NATURE OF VIOLENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RAPE/ DEFILEMENT</th>
<th>Physical Violence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is most common for children to come in for cases of “defilement” (rape of a child), while it is more common for adult women to report cases of physical abuse by an intimate partner. Cases of rape were perpetrated most commonly by “strangers.”

**ELDORET DISTRICT COURT SGBV CASES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RAPE</th>
<th>DEFILEMENT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRENDS:**

- Dropping out of school
- Exploiter school fees
- Need to start employment early
- Early pregnancy or marriage
- Result: No diploma = no formal job
- High male unemployment
- Illicit cash trade
- Facilitates violence within households and brew houses
- Poverty trap for women and children
- Forced sex work
- Vulnerable to sexual abuse
- Vulnerable to disease
- Informal employment
- Hacking fruit on the street
- Hacking secondhand clothes
- Flexibility to take care of children

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**MODEL**

**WOMEN’S EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE**

**IN INTERVIEW WITH A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MOTHER FROM KENYA:**

**SAMPLE SIZE:** 6,518 women interviewed for the domestic-violence module out of 11,444 total women surveyed

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