

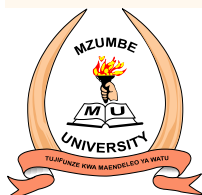
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Why is Gender Based Violence still Prevalent at Secondary Schools in Morogoro Region, Tanzania?

Stella Malangalila Kinemo¹

Abstract

Bearing the obstacles of Gender Based Violence (GBV) to student learning, this paper provides descriptive analysis of the nature, prevalence of GBV experienced by students attending secondary education in Morogoro Municipal Council, and emerging issues in process of addressing institutional gaps that fuels GBV. This cross-sectional study selected at randomly both, three secondary schools and student participants attending those secondary school located at MMC in Tanzania. Data were collected through a well-structured interview schedules and questionnaires. The study utilized descriptive statistics in the analysis school-related GBV pattern. The study's findings revealed that physical, psychological, sexual, gender and health based violence are becoming recurring decimal in the hall-mark of students learning in secondary schools. However, physical violence and psychological violence accounted for the bulk of violence against children in schools. This paper concludes that profiling the pattern of school-related GBV provides socio-dynamic means of addressing the problem. The study ends by recommending a need to review Tanzania's educational policy of 2014 to accommodate dimensions of school-related GBV.

Keywords: Gender, violence, gender based violence

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Introduction

Gender based violence is a global phenomenon manifested in every aspect of life. It is a violation of human rights and a manifestation of gender discrimination which poses serious threats and obstacles for the achievement of the Education for All Goals and the Millennium Development Goals, especially the ones relating to gender equality.

School-related gender based violence is a serious obstacle to learning causing not only physical harm but also severe psychological and educational damages. The issue of violence against girls is often considered as a taboo issue and together with the silence that surrounds it, often leads to no or weak mobilization. However, despite the limited research in this area, there is indicative evidence that gender based violence unfortunately permeates the school environment in sub-Saharan Africa, as in other parts of the world, with severe physical, psychological and learning consequences for students (Burnnet, 1998).

According to the results of a Global School-based Health Survey by WHO in a number of developing countries, including Tanzania, between 20% and 65% of school-aged children reported having been verbally or physically bullied in the 30 days prior to the study which is an indication of the phenomenon of violence in schools. Furthermore, a recent study conducted by Save the Children, Sweden conducted in Middle East and other parts of the world, report cases of sexual harassment at school or of early marriages depriving girls of their right to education.

According to the United Nations Secretary-General's 'In-depth Study on Violence against Women', it says "although harassment is recognized as a grave problem" in developing countries "little is known about the magnitude of the problem" with the exception of a few studies, mostly conducted in Africa. Despite the growing mobilization around this phenomenon this kind of violence persists in all countries and represents a generalized violation of human rights and a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality.

The Millennium Development Goal emphasize on the promotion of gender equality and promotion of good quality education for girls and boys by raising awareness and fighting against the phenomenon of school related gender based violence. This paper therefore seeks to examine nature, causes and extent of Gender Based Violence in Tanzania taking the case of Morogoro Municipality.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section looks at the background of the problem. The second section focuses on the concept of gender based violence. The third section points methodology used in this study while fourth section provides findings on the forms and causes of GBV in secondary schools. The last section concludes by giving key recommendations to the policy makers and enforcers of law.

Literature review

The Concept of Gender-Based Violence

Gender based Violence (GBV) is a major public health and human right problem involving all ages and sexes. Although the term “Gender based violence” is widely used as a synonym for violence against women, GBV also occurs among men (Yusuph et al, 2011). The concept of gender-based violence points to violence perpetrated on the basis of particular constructions of gender, and it is well established that men are the major perpetrators of such violence both against women and against other men (Kenway and Fitzclarence, 1997). Gender based violence includes a host of harmful behaviours that are directed at women and girls because of their sex, including wife abuse, sexual assault, dowry-related murder, marital rape, selective malnourishment of female children, forced prostitution, female genital mutilation, and sexual abuse of female children (Heise et al, 2002). USAID (2003) provides a definition as “all forms of violence targeting victims on the basis of gender roles traditionally assigned to their sex” It can be physical, sexual, emotional and/or economic in form (Morrison and Orlando, 2004). School-related gender-based violence results in sexual, physical, or psychological harm to girls and boys. Violence can take place in the school, on school grounds, going to and from school, or in school dormitories and may be perpetrated by teachers, students, or community members. Both girls and boys can be victims as well as perpetrators (Brookes, 2004). He narrates that, school-related gender-based violence results in sexual, physical, or psychological harm to girls and boys. It includes any form of violence or abuse that is based on gendered stereotypes or that targets students on the basis of their sex. Gender-based violence in schools is one of the barriers to students’ education.

Studies have shown, victims of gender-based violence have often been found to change school or stop attending due to fear of continued abuse, particularly when perpetrators are allowed to stay on. Gender based violence also results to drop out or have poor academic records, and the links between violence and substance abuse are strong (Matthews, Grigg and Caine, 1999). Poverty has been linked to the prevalence of gender-based violence in schools

and the connection is manifested in a number of ways (Hallam 1994; Mirsky 2003). Low wages for teachers may lead them to feel entitled to labor or sexual favors from students – as a benefit to supplement their low wages. The levels and patterns of violence in schools often reflect the levels and patterns of violence in countries, communities, and families” (Pinheiro 2006).

Methodology

The study focused at analyzing school related gender based violence in secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality in Tanzania mainland. The schools selected were Mafiga, Sumaye and Kigurunyembe. The schools were selected in order to consider differences in gender based violence in different settings. Mafiga and Kigurunyembe Secondary Schools represented urban setting whereby Mafiga being public school and the later being the private school. Sumaye Secondary School represented semi-urban setting because it is located in the vicinity of Morogoro Municipality. The three schools which participated in this study were secondary schools. Sumaye Secondary School and Mafiga Secondary School are owned by the government and were ordinary level secondary schools while Kigurunyembe Secondary School was a private school and a high level secondary school.

Data collection methods

There were two types of structured interviews conducted. One was for teachers and the second was for municipal officials. Teachers were asked information related to types of gender based violence they knew with regard to their schools and causes of such violence. Students were asked questions related to forms of gender based violence existing in their schools, and types of abuse. The questionnaire instituted was structured questionnaire, which was administered to students. The selection of students based on the students who have experienced multiple gender based violence. The ones who experienced most physical, sexual and psychological abuse were asked to volunteer. In this study 60 students were asked to volunteer per school. One head teacher in each of the three schools were selected in order to obtain information related to the administration of schools, demographic information and their experience in relation to the subject matter. The study selected 19 out 50 teachers per school which is about 38% of the sample per school. The selected teachers included academic teacher, matrons, sports teachers, biology teachers, disciplinary teachers, and other teachers who are teaching other subjects in the schools.

The Morogoro municipal departments selected included Department of Education, Social Work, Community Development, and Planning Department. These were selected mainly because they are the ones dealing with children issues on daily basis. Data on socio-demographics included age, educational level, and sex of the students was obtained. Experience of students on violence was assessed using the violence against children instrument and it contained 6 questions for psychological abuse, 3 questions for physical abuse and 4 questions for sexual abuse. To assess experience of emotional abuse the students were asked whether they have been ever insulted; belittled or humiliated in front of other people or threatened to hurt. To assess the experience of physical abuse, students were asked whether they were ever slapped; pushed or something thrown at them could hurt; kicked, dragged, beaten, hit with fist; choked, strangled or burnt on purpose; threatened or hurt by , knife, or other weapon. Four items were inquired about sexual violence practices against students; being physically forced to have sex; having sex because of being afraid to refuse; forced to do something sexual which is degrading or humiliating and being forced to have sex after beaten by other. Responses of respondents were calculated into percentages.

Presentation of the study findings and Discussion

Prevalence of forms of GBV

Findings from respondents showed that generally in all sampled schools physical violence 117 (65%) accounted for the big part of the violence because of habit of teachers using corporal punishments to students and heavy labor as a means of disciplinary measures. Psychological violence accounted for 72 (40%) this meant insult among students themselves and humiliation in front of the people. Other types of violence reported included gender – based violence 27(15%), sexual violence 25(14%) and health-related violence 4(2%). This information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of Violence observed in Secondary School in Morogoro Municipality

Types of violence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Physical Violence	117	65
Psychological Violence	72	40
Sexual Violence	25	14
Gender-Based Violence	27	15
Health -Related Violence	4	2

The findings in table 1 reveals that the major violence which prevails in secondary schools was physical violence compared to other types of violence. An overview of the prevalence of the different types of violence against children according to school and level of schooling are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Prevalence of forms of violence according to school and level of schooling

Type of violence	O' LEVEL		A' LEVEL	
	Mafiga	Sumaye	Total %	Kigurunyembe
Physical Violence	38%	42%	80%	49%
Psychological Violence	33%	38%	71%	25%
Sexual Violence	14%	18%	32%	47%
Health -Related Violence	1%	1%	2%	0%

Overall forms of violence in O' level in Mafiga and Sumaye secondary schools in table 2 showed that there was more physical violence 80%, followed by psychological violence 71%, then sexual violence 32% and lastly health related violence 1%. Physical violence (80%) ranked high compared to other forms of violence because of frequent corporal punishment to students being considered as a regular tendency in improving students disciplines. Psychological violence 33% was expected to be higher compared to other violence because all forms of violence have direct link to psychology of a student, although most of the student did not seem to consider psychological effect when they get other abuses. Health related violence ranked low (1%) in comparison to other forms of violence because students did not see being neglected when they attend hospitals for treatment.

Overall violence for A' level in Kigurunyembe Secondary School in table 2 showed that there was more physical violence 49%, followed by psychological violence 25%, then sexual violence 47% and lastly health related violence 0%. Physical violence (49%) ranked high compared to other forms of violence because of frequent corporal punishment to students being considered as a regular tendency in improving students disciplines. For A' level sexual violence (47%) is higher than the psychological 25% because A' level student are more matured hence able to identify sexual violence easily. A comparison of the prevalence of violence in the O' level and the A' level revealed that all forms of violence were more in the O' level than in the A' level except for sexual violence. Physical violence was higher in the O' level (80%) compared to the A' level (49%).

Psychological violence was also more prevalent in the O' level (71%) than in the A' level (25%). In the A' level, health-related violence was not reported, but in the O' level about 2% of students reported it. Sexual violence was however more prevalent in the A' level (47%) than in the O' level (32%). Low incidence of gender based violence reported in the A' level might be related to the gender parity (against girls) in education that is more pronounced in advanced level secondary education. This argument is more likely to reflect the situation on ground has factors that contribute to gender based violence are among the reasons why girls don't go to school. Such factors include absence of separate dining for girls, and long distances between home and school.

Prevalence of violence in schools according to gender and level of school

The findings in table 3 indicate that physical and psychological violence were not evenly distributed among males and females students at the secondary education level in Morogoro. Teachers were reported to be more likely to use canings, beatings and whippings on boys, while girls were more likely to receive verbal abuse and psychological humiliation.

Table 3: Prevalence of forms of violence according to sex and level of school

Type of violence	SEX		LEVEL OF SCHOOL	
	MALE	FEMALE	O'LEVEL	A'LEVEL
Physical Violence	22%	28%	75%	63%
Psychological Violence	49%	51%	47%	48%
Sexual Violence	12%	18%	7.8%	5.5%
Gender-Based Violence	16%	22%	28%	32%
Health -Related Violence	3%	5%	2%	1%

The prevalent rate of violence across levels of schools was determined based on male and female. Findings showed that gender based violence still constitute a problem in secondary schools affecting girls than boys in varying degrees. Findings show that all forms of violence were higher with girls compared to boys in relation to physical violence; psychological violence, sexual violence, and gender based violence are common with girls than boys.

Causes of School Gender Based Violence

Findings have revealed that there were three major causes of gender based violence in schools related to physical abuse, sexual and psychological abuse as shown in table 4. It was revealed that physical abuse was mainly caused by corporal punishment (75%), heavy labor (72%), slap (47%) and kicking (11%). Corporal punishment was one of the leading form of abuse (75%) compared to kicking (11%) because in most of the schools every teacher walks with stick for beating students as a way of undertaking disciplinary measures. Kicking happened sometimes when a student refused punishment therefore a teacher may kick the student or students kick themselves.

Sexual forms of GBV were caused by unforced sex (43%), forced sex (30%), and unwanted touching (68%). Unwanted touching was the leading form of sexual abuse among the students because this was taken as normal practice among the students. Male students were touching female students and female students considered it as a joke. Psychosocial forms of GBV were being caused by insult (91%) and humiliation in front of people (74%). Despite the fact that all causes of GBV results into psychological abuse but insult and humiliation in front of people were seen as the major causes of psychological abuse.

Table 4 : Causes of Gender Based Violence in schools

GBV Source	frequency			Average frq
	Mafiga	Sumaye	K/Nyembe	
Physical				
Corporal punishment	82	78	65	75
Heavy labour	83	75	58	72
Slap	42	50	50	47
Kicking	10	13	8	11
Sexual				
Unforced sex	33	47	50	43
Forced sex	20	42	28	30
Unwanted touching	50	70	83	68
Psychological				
Insult	83	92	97	91
Humiliation in front of people	67	75	80	74

Conclusion and Policy Implication

The study showed that, firstly the prevalence of various forms of gender-based violence among students exists. Secondly, the gender-based violence happens because of gender norms, and cultural habits. Therefore, it can be concluded that lack of awareness campaign, government intervention, school curriculum development, school counselling services and law enforcement mechanism necessitates a new alternative measure in order to prevent violence in schools. For this reason, a review of all policies as related to gender-based violence are the right choice towards improving enabling environment for students in Tanzania. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to minimise gender-based violence against children in schools.

- There are should be counselling school services on violence in schools in order to minimize occurrences of gender based violence.
- There should be awareness creation on prevention of violence against children with a view to facilitating preventive actions
- Gender violence in schools should be reported for further action by the government. Furthermore there should be training to students and teachers on how to stop violence to students.
- Punishment should be given to teachers and students who cause gender violence in schools. Enacted laws on violence should be enforced and culprits should be punished.

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