

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AWARENESS ON A CADEMIC PERFORMANCE
AMONGST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MUKONO DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY
OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

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UNIVERSITY**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I, **Kasemiire Bridget**, hereby declare that this dissertation is based on my original work. It has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning for the award of my course. All the sources that have been used have been cited according to the best of my knowledge. I therefore, submit my original work for the partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelors of Governance and International Relations.

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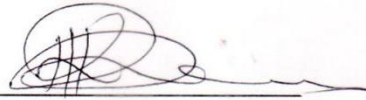
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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation titled; “**Gender-Based Violence Awareness On Academic Performance Amongst University Students In Mukono District: A Case Study Of Uganda Christian University**”. was under my supervision and the dissertation is now ready for presentation to the Department of Undergraduate Studies in the School of Social Sciences at Uganda Christian University.

Mrs. Keren-happuch Kiconco Bitu

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Date:

6TH SEPTEMBER 2024

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty Lord that has provided me with the wisdom, knowledge, and strength needed to accomplish this task.

I also wholly dedicate this work to my family for the support, prayers, and guidance and for being genuine points of reference for me throughout my academic journey thus far. I dedicate this to my friends for encouraging and advising me appropriately.

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ABSTRACT

Gender based violence in all its different forms has been a landmark problem that has faced the girl-child even in settings like institutions of higher learning. This violence has far-reaching effects on its victims in that it manifests itself in the academic performance leading to cases of decreased academic performance, increased absenteeism, higher dropout rates, and demotivation to study. Recognizing all this, this study seeks to increase the awareness of this Gender Based Violence amongst university students, the factors causing this problem, and developing different strategies that can curb the occurrence of this problem. This research is structured as follows: Chapter One that provides a detailed foundation of the study detailing the objectives, background etc. Chapter Two thereafter provides a literature review of the existing academic literature on Gender Based Violence, Chapter 3 contains the methodology of the methods the different methods of data collection analysis, Chapter 4 presents the findings after exploring the occurrence of Gender Based Violence spotlighting key factors that cause this problem. The final one is Chapter 5 which presents the different conclusions and recommendations after the analysis of the data

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 background.

Gender-based violence provides a sharp lens that reveals how unequal the treatment of the rights of women and girls really is. This scenario is commonly expressed within university settings, and it focuses on UCU, situated in Mukono. The way girls and women go through experiences in such academic environments is largely defined by the nature of the society in which they are embedded. The dominant gender roles contribute to an environment where female students are treated differentially, making it very important to be aware of the urgent call for improvement of conditions and equality within the university.

Yet in an environment that is predominantly patriarchal, these challenges come out in what has been described as setting in which female students face gender-based violence at different levels, especially in Mukono, but particularly at UCU. This disparity is often magnified poignantly by reports provided by different sources, including mass media reports, police reports, newspapers, and other information dispensers. According to research conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 95% of Ugandan Women and girls have experienced physical or sexual violence or both, by partners and non-partners since the year of 15 years. These usually include mass media reports, police reports, newspapers, and other information channels. A study by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics showed that 95% of Ugandan Women and girls have experienced. Such reports underline the need to be proactive in dealing with the root causes of violence against women and in measures taken to ensure a more secure and non-discriminatory academic community.

Gender based violence remains one of the most fundamental global public health concerns since it is estimated that about 1 in every 3 women around the world has experienced either physical and/or sexual specific violence, mostly intimate partner violence, and non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. WHO, 2022. The violence natured in physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse predominately affects women and girls but also may affect all other gender identity victims. Rai et al., 2022. The effects of GBV are long-ranging, and the effects often have ripple effects outside the immediate victims and extend to their families, communities, and academic performances. Consistent evidence from studies demonstrates that GBV results in poor academic performance, increased absenteeism, and

school dropout among students, as a result of psychological trauma and stress associated with such violence, which impairs cognitive functioning, concentration, and motivation. International organizations and academia have, therefore, embraced the urgency of this situation in preferring to develop and implement strategies that would prevent GBV and provide care to students who have fallen victim to such at institutions of learning.

It can be defined as violence that targets women because of their gender. It includes all actions that cause physical, sexual, or psychological damage to a woman. (Edward, 2014) By this definition, many students do not fully understand what gender-based violence is, let alone its many forms, like emotional, social, and cultural. The awareness is mostly provided for sexual and domestic violence, meaning that there is a gap in awareness that needs specific targeting through education.

The results will be a success through understanding the history, which will assist in targeting the causes of gender-based violence against female students at UCU, Mukono. For effective interventions in response to the diverse nature of gender violence, full comprehension of the complexity surrounding the issue is required. This study participates in the larger debate on the rights of women and focuses on the awareness of Gender-Based Violence in institutions of higher learning. This information will then be used to inform and guide activities that make Uganda Christian University in Mukono a safer and more accommodating place for female students.

1.3 major objective.

To increase awareness of gender-based violence among university students.

1.4 specific objectives

- 1) To establish the conceptual meaning of gender-based violence awareness.
- 2) To establish the factors influencing the occurrence of gender-based violence awareness on academics
- 3) To find out gender-based awareness levels amongst students at ucu
- 4) To find out strategies to curb or minimize gender based violence.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What is the conceptual meaning of gender-based violence awareness?

- 2) What factors contribute to the limited awareness of gender based violence among students at Uganda Christian University, and how does this impact their academic experiences?
- 3) How aware are students at UCU about gender-based awareness?
- 4) What strategies can minimize gender-based violence?

1.5 problem statement.

The problem statement is hereby illustrated to indicate that gender-based violence is a global problem that affects people in different spheres of life, including in institutions of learning. Despite the high incidences of GBV, especially sexual harassment among the student populace at UCU, Mukono, Uganda, as reported by the studies conducted, there is still a big knowledge deficit on various manifestations of GBV, such as emotional, social, and cultural violence, for which the researchers will provide an overview. Muhumuza & Nasser, 2023.

This may suggest that students are, to a significant extent, unaware of the different forms GBV takes, and this could hamper their ability to recognize such issues and take some remedial measures. The study therefore seeks to establish awareness of the status quo prevalence, specific forms, and root causes of GBV at UCU in formulating such education interventions targeted at observed limited understanding of GBV and its harmful effects.

It is hoped that this study will go some way to contribute toward efforts of making a safer and more inclusive campus environment at UCU by bringing enlightenment to individuals on proactive actions they can take in the prevention and response to GBV behaviors and situations.

1.6 Geographical Scope

The research will be conducted at Uganda Christian University, the primary setting where one can investigate the issue of gender-based violence awareness among students. UCU is situated in Mukono District, about 27 kilometres east of Kampala City, the capital of Uganda. The main campus of the university is located in Mukono Municipality-a district headquarters serving as an education, commercial, and cultural hub of the Central Region of Uganda.

The research will be confined to the UCU campus and its immediate surroundings because that is the focal point. This can enable a detailed examination of the campus environment, institutional policies, and experiences of students with respect to awareness about GBV. Focusing their attention on the UCU campus, the study sought to achieve an in-depth understanding of the factors at play affecting awareness and understanding levels of the different forms of gender-based violence among the students at the university.

1.7. Time Scope

This study will run for a period of 3 months, starting from July 2024 and ending in September 2024. The research will be bound within the stated period, assessing the status of awareness on gender-based violence and implications for students' academic performance in UCU. The investigation to be conducted within the period between July to September 2024 is proposed in light of the fact that the most updated perspectives and experiences of the UCU students are needed, since this researcher would be gathering fresh information with regard to the current academic and campus climate, as well as any changes or developments in the same period as compared to the previous academic year. This duration, 3 months in fact, will be enough to apply different tools of data collection: questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions that eventually will enable comprehensive understanding of the level of gender-based violence awareness among students, and possible implications for their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, the timeliness of this study period in 2024 will ensure that the findings from this research are relevant to and can help guide and enhance university policies, programs, and support services centered on the awareness of gender-based violence and student success initiatives for the next academic year.

1.8 Content scope

The scope of this research study will be limited to examining the issue of gender-based violence awareness and its impact on academic performance among undergraduate students enrolled at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Mukono District, Uganda, focusing on the

main campus. The content scope will explore key areas, including the levels of awareness and understanding about gender-based violence among students, the prevalence of gender-based violence incidents experienced by students, the perceived impact of gender-based violence on students' academic performance and overall well-being, the availability and effectiveness of support services and intervention programs at UCU addressing gender-based violence, and recommendations for strengthening gender-based violence awareness and support systems to improve student academic outcomes. Data collection will involve surveying a representative sample of UCU undergraduate students, conducting in-depth interviews with selected students and university administrators, and facilitating focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into the issue. The findings of this study are intended to provide UCU and other stakeholders with evidence-based insights that can inform the development of targeted policies, programs, and support services to address gender-based violence and its impact on the academic success of university students in Mukono District..

1.9 Justification of the study

The study on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) awareness among university students is crucial, as some lack understanding, potentially leading to incidents. This research endeavors to shed light on GBV awareness, equipping individuals with knowledge to prevent and address such violence. Importantly, the study seeks to understand the plight of silent victims, gauge awareness levels, and increase them to create a university atmosphere prioritizing equity, respect, and safety for all. Within the UCU context, this study is justified by the need to understand specific awareness-related challenges students face regarding gender-based violence. The findings are expected to benefit stakeholders and inform strategies to promote gender equality and prevent GBV in higher education.

1.10 Significance of the study

This research holds significant importance as it sheds light on and addresses the urgent concerns surrounding Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within UCU. By undertaking this study, we contribute to the enrichment of existing literature by bridging crucial gaps and advocating for heightened awareness.

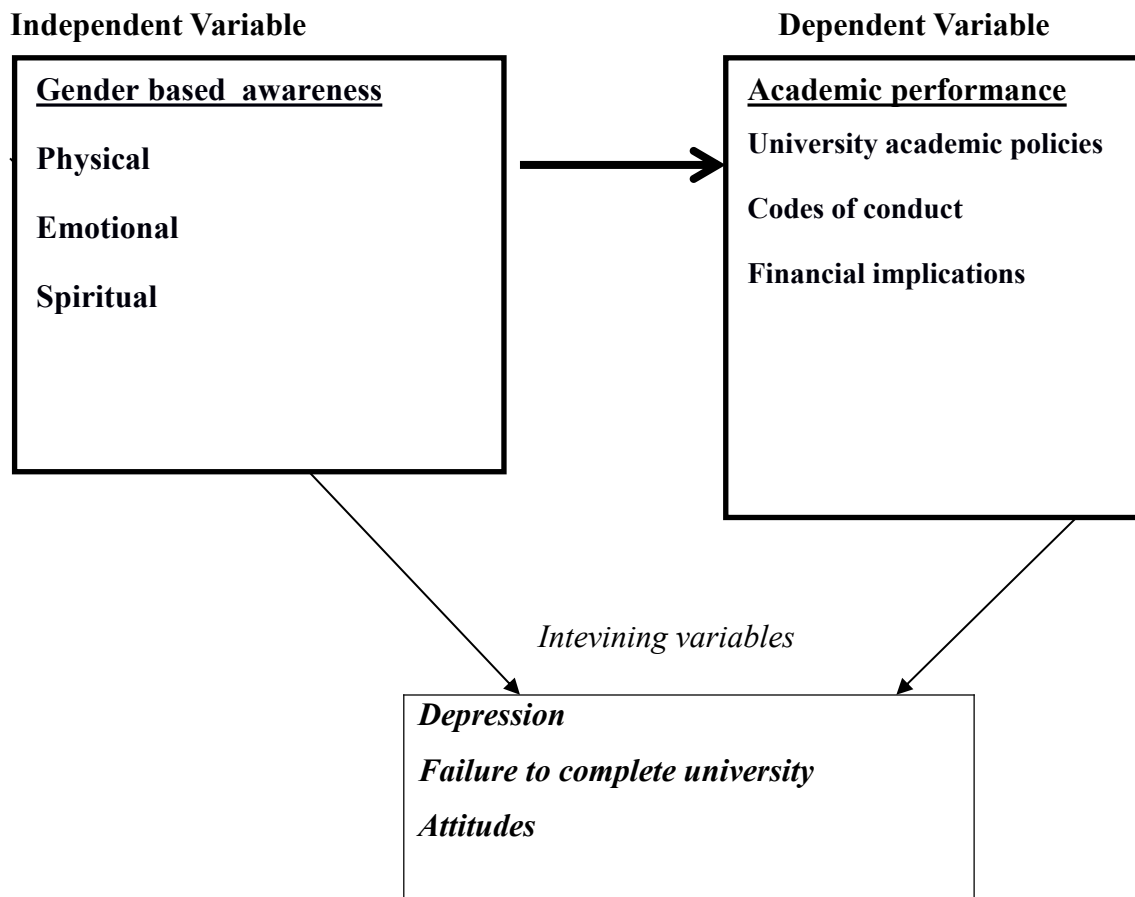
Knowledge of GBV awareness through the findings levels informs the development of policies and interventions aimed at preventing and addressing GBV on university campuses.

Policymakers can tailor their approaches based on the specific needs and challenges identified through awareness assessments.

1.11 Theoretical framework

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Albert Bandura provides the theoretical foundation for this study on gender-based violence (GBV) awareness among university students (Bandura, 1986). Guided by SCT's emphasis on the social environment's influence on individual behaviors, this research examines how students' exposure to media, peers, and role models, as well as their knowledge and understanding of GBV, shape their awareness and attitudes towards these issues (Chatterjee, 1984). The aim is to inform the development of targeted interventions that challenge prevailing norms and promote alternative narratives rejecting violence and championing gender equality.

1.11 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.



Source: Agarwal, 2006; Nakiyingi, 2010; CGAP, 2009; Kelley & Nakosteen, 2005; McMahon, 2001; Miller, 1988; Birley & Westhead 1994

The provided conceptual framework demonstrates the key variables and their hypothesized relationships in the study on gender-based violence (GBV) awareness and its impact on academic performance among university students. The independent variable is GBV awareness, representing the level of understanding and knowledge that students possess about gender-based violence. This is proposed to directly influence the dependent variable of academic performance, which examines how GBV awareness affects students' educational outcomes and success.

Importantly, the framework identifies several intervening variables that may moderate or mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. These include depression, failure to complete university, and student attitudes. The conceptual model suggests that increased GBV awareness could potentially lead to higher incidences of depression or negative attitudes among students, which may then impact their ability to perform well academically and increase the likelihood of them failing to complete their university education.

By examining these interconnected factors, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how GBV awareness influences the academic experiences and achievements of university students. This insight can then inform the development of tailored interventions and support systems to address gender-based violence, promote equity and respect, and ultimately enhance the overall academic success of the student population. The conceptual framework provides a clear visual representation of the hypothesized relationships to guide the research process and analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of different definitions of gender-based violence from different scholars and, the causes and effects of gender-based violence from scholars.

2.0 what is gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence is violence that is directed against an individual or group of individuals based on their gender (Cruz and Klinger, 2020). In other words, it encompasses violence against women and girls as well as violence against men and boys. When the topic of gender-based violence is brought up, most people always exclude men and boys yet they are also greatly affected by this aspect that is some men are always beaten up but they don't forward these cases because society will look at them as weak men.

In particular, gender-based is defined as acts of violence rooted in some form of patriarchal ideology to maintain social power for men. (Council of Europe,2021). In this case, GBV is referred to as violence inflicted on individuals primarily women and girls as a means of maintaining male dominance and control within society. This violence can manifest in various forms like physical, sexual, emotional, or economic abuse.

In addition, the (UN Nations, 2020) defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

Furthermore, Gender-based violence is defined as physical, sexual, and psychological violence against both men and women that occurs within the family and the community and is perpetrated or condoned by the state. World Bank (Jan. 1, 2022)

2.1 To establish the conceptual meaning of gender based violence awareness

The conceptual underpinnings of GBV awareness involve a multidimensional understanding that extends beyond just recognizing different manifestations of violence directed toward individuals due to their gender identity or expression (Flood & Pease, 2020). Deeper awareness requires comprehending the complex sociocultural factors and gendered power dynamics that perpetuate such violence within a given context, including how gender norms and structural inequalities shape the experiences of victims and survivors, as well as the barriers they face (World Health Organization, 2021). GBV awareness also entails knowledge about the far-reaching consequences and impacts of this violence, which go beyond immediate harms to include broader social, economic, and developmental reverberations (Heise et al., 2023). At the highest level, GBV awareness encompasses understanding effective strategies and interventions for addressing gender-based violence, such as policies, laws, support services, and community-based approaches that promote gender equality and protect individual rights (Ellsberg et al., 2020). Cultivating this holistic, multidimensional awareness is crucial for creating safer, more equitable environments.

It involves recognizing the pervasive and multifaceted nature of GBV, which can manifest in overt acts of abuse as well as more subtle forms of discrimination and marginalization (Heise et al., 2019). This awareness extends to understanding the gendered power dynamics and inequalities that underlie GBV, and how these are reinforced through social norms, institutional practices, and cultural beliefs (Michau et al., 2020). Additionally, GBV awareness encompasses knowledge about the profound and far-reaching consequences of such violence, which can include physical and mental health issues, economic insecurity, disrupted education and employment, and intergenerational trauma (Ellsberg et al., 2022). This holistic understanding of the impacts of GBV is crucial for motivating and guiding comprehensive prevention and response efforts.

GBV awareness also encompasses knowledge about the impacts and consequences of such violence, both on individual victims/survivors as well as on communities and society at large. This includes awareness of the physical, mental, and socioeconomic toll of GBV, which can range from immediate physical injuries and long-term health issues to psychological trauma, depression, and PTSD (UN Women, 2020). GBV awareness also involves understanding the broader social and economic impacts, such as disruptions to education, employment, and economic security for victims and their families. Crucially, GBV awareness requires

knowledge about the various barriers that victims and survivors face in accessing necessary support services and achieving justice, including social stigma, financial constraints, lack of awareness of resources, and fear of retaliation (Sagot, 2022). Cultivating this nuanced understanding of the wide-ranging impacts of GBV is essential for designing and implementing holistic, survivor-centered approaches to prevention and response, and for addressing the systemic inequities that perpetuate such violence in the first place.

GBV awareness entails an understanding of strategies and interventions for preventing and responding to gender-based violence, such as through the promotion of gender equality, the implementation of protective policies and laws, and the provision of comprehensive support services (Ellsberg et al., 2015). This includes awareness of community-based approaches that empower individuals and mobilize collective action to transform harmful social norms and practices (Michau et al., 2015). GBV awareness also involves knowledge about the critical role of accessible, trauma-informed support services, including emergency shelters, legal assistance, mental health counseling, and economic empowerment programs, in enabling victims and survivors to access safety, healing, and justice (Sagot, 2022). At the institutional level, GBV awareness encompasses an understanding of effective policy and legislative frameworks that enshrine gender equality, criminalize various forms of GBV, and hold perpetrators accountable (UN Women, 2020). Cultivating this holistic awareness of prevention and response strategies equips individuals and communities with the knowledge and tools to take concrete action against gender-based violence.

2.2 To establish the factors influencing the occurrence of gender-based violence awareness on academics

Key factors that are likely to shape the levels of GBV awareness within academic communities. At the individual level, personal experiences, gender identity, and prior education or training on GBV issues can significantly influence one's awareness and sensitivity to this pervasive problem (Flood & Pease, 2022). Academics from marginalized gender backgrounds, who have directly experienced or witnessed GBV, tend to exhibit higher levels of awareness compared to those from privileged gender groups (Sabri et al., 2022). This is because those who have been affected by GBV, either through their own lived experiences or close exposure, develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts, and complexities surrounding gender-based violence. They are more attuned to recognizing the various manifestations of GBV, the barriers that victims and survivors face, and the urgent need for effective prevention and response strategies. In contrast, academics from dominant

gender groups may lack this firsthand perspective and may have internalized societal norms that downplay or normalize certain forms of GBV. Moreover, those who have received targeted education, training, or professional development on GBV are better equipped to identify, address, and advocate against these issues within academic contexts. This underscores the importance of providing all academics with opportunities to enhance their GBV awareness through interdisciplinary coursework, workshops, and other learning experiences that center the perspectives of marginalized genders.

Researchers have tried to list several key factors that shape the levels of GBV awareness within academic communities. At the individual level, personal experiences, gender identity, and prior education or training on GBV issues can significantly influence one's awareness and sensitivity to this pervasive problem (Flood & Pease, 2022). Academics from marginalized gender backgrounds, who have directly experienced or witnessed GBV, tend to exhibit higher levels of awareness compared to those from privileged gender groups (Sabri et al., 2022). This is because those who have been affected by GBV, either through their own lived experiences or close exposure, develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts, and complexities surrounding gender-based violence. They are more attuned to recognizing the various manifestations of GBV, the barriers that victims and survivors face, and the urgent need for effective prevention and response strategies. In contrast, academics from dominant gender groups may lack this firsthand perspective and may have internalized societal norms that downplay or normalize certain forms of GBV. Moreover, those who have received targeted education, training, or professional development on GBV are better equipped to identify, address, and advocate against these issues within academic contexts. This underscores the importance of providing all academics with opportunities to enhance their GBV awareness through interdisciplinary coursework, workshops, and other learning experiences that center the perspectives of marginalized genders.

Institutional factors are likely to be a crucial role in shaping the levels of GBV awareness within academic communities. Universities and colleges that have implemented comprehensive GBV prevention and response policies, provide relevant coursework and programming, and foster a culture of gender-equitable practices, tend to have faculty, staff, and students with greater GBV awareness (Ellsberg et al., 2022). When higher education institutions prioritize addressing GBV through dedicated policies, resources, and initiatives, it sends a clear message about the seriousness of the issue and the institution's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment. The presence of GBV-focused centers, research

projects, and advocacy groups on campus can further elevate awareness by facilitating discussions, disseminating knowledge, and providing support services (Michau et al., 2022). These institutional efforts not only enhance individual-level understanding of GBV but also contribute to the development of a broader campus culture that recognizes gender-based violence as an urgent concern requiring collective action. Additionally, the incorporation of GBV-related content into academic curricula, such as through dedicated courses, modules, or case studies, can systematically build the knowledge and critical thinking skills of students, future academics, and professionals who will shape societal responses to this pervasive issue. Ultimately, the institutional approach to GBV, reflected in policies, programs, and campus climate, plays a pivotal role in cultivating heightened awareness and engagement with this societal challenge within academic communities.

Broader social and cultural norms surrounding gender, power, and violence also shape academic understandings of GBV. Prevailing societal beliefs that trivialize or normalize certain forms of GBV, or that place the onus on victims, can impede the development of nuanced awareness among academics (Heise et al., 2022). For instance, cultural narratives that dismiss sexual harassment as "harmless flirting" or blame survivors of intimate partner violence for "staying" in abusive relationships can become internalized by academics, leading them to overlook or downplay the seriousness of these issues. Such societal attitudes, which are often rooted in patriarchal and misogynistic ideologies, can become embedded within the academic environment, subtly shaping the ways in which GBV is perceived, discussed, and addressed. Conversely, communities that actively challenge harmful gender stereotypes and promote gender justice tend to have higher levels of GBV awareness in their educational institutions (UN Women, 2022). When there is a broader social emphasis on dismantling power imbalances, challenging the normalization of violence, and centering the experiences of marginalized genders, academic institutions are more likely to foster a culture of heightened sensitivity, empathy, and commitment to addressing GBV. This underscores the importance of addressing broader societal norms and structures that perpetuate gender-based violence, as these deeply influence the perspectives and actions of academics, who play a crucial role in shaping the discourse and responses to this pervasive issue within their institutions and communities.

2.3 To find out gender-based awareness levels amongst students at UCU

Research suggests that individual-level factors play a significant role in shaping GBV awareness within academic communities. Academics from marginalized gender backgrounds, who have directly experienced or witnessed GBV, tend to exhibit higher levels of awareness compared to those from privileged gender groups (Sabri et al., 2022). This is because those who have been affected by GBV, either through their own lived experiences or close exposure, develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts, and complexities surrounding gender-based violence. They are more attuned to recognizing the various manifestations of GBV, the barriers that victims and survivors face, and the urgent need for effective prevention and response strategies.

In contrast, academics from dominant gender groups may lack this firsthand perspective and may have internalized societal norms that downplay or normalize certain forms of GBV (Flood & Pease, 2022). Moreover, those who have received targeted education, training, or professional development on GBV are better equipped to identify, address, and advocate against these issues within academic contexts. This underscores the importance of providing all students with opportunities to enhance their GBV awareness through interdisciplinary coursework, workshops, and other learning experiences that center the perspectives of marginalized genders.

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actively challenge harmful gender stereotypes and promote gender justice tend to have higher levels of GBV awareness in their educational institutions (UN Women, 2022).

2.4 To find out strategies to curb or minimize gender based violence.

At the individual level, enhancing GBV awareness and education is a crucial starting point. Providing students, faculty, and staff with comprehensive training on the dynamics of GBV can help cultivate a deeper understanding of this pervasive issue. This training should cover the various manifestations of GBV, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse, as well as the unique challenges and experiences of survivors (Jewkes et al., 2020). By gaining insights into the power imbalances, societal norms, and systemic barriers that enable GBV, individuals can develop greater sensitivity and empathy towards those affected (Michau et al., 2020). Furthermore, the training should empower participants to recognize the warning signs of GBV, such as controlling behaviors, isolation, and sudden changes in demeanor or academic performance (Ellsberg et al., 2022). Equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to respond appropriately, whether by providing immediate support, reporting incidents, or connecting survivors with crucial services, can be a crucial step in breaking the cycle of violence and ensuring that survivors receive the care and resources they need (Crenshaw, 2021). Ultimately, this multi-faceted approach to individual-level GBV awareness and education can foster a campus community that is better equipped to prevent, identify, and effectively address gender-based violence.

Institutional-level strategies are equally important in curbing GBV. Higher education institutions should implement robust GBV prevention and response policies that outline clear protocols for reporting, investigation, and disciplinary measures (Ellsberg et al., 2022). These policies should be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and community partners, to ensure they are comprehensive, survivor-centric, and tailored to the unique needs and contexts of the institution. Alongside these policies, institutions must provide accessible, survivor-centric support services, such as counseling, legal aid, and medical assistance, to ensure that survivors have the resources and care they need to heal and recover (Ellsberg et al., 2022). Additionally, institutions should foster a culture of accountability, where GBV is unequivocally condemned and all members of the community are empowered to be active bystanders and advocates (Michau et al., 2015). This involves consistent messaging from leadership, comprehensive training for the entire campus community, and a commitment to swiftly and transparently addressing any incidents of GBV. By implementing these multifaceted, institution-wide strategies, higher education institutions

can create an environment that prioritizes prevention, promotes survivor well-being, and holds perpetrators accountable, ultimately working to curb and minimize the prevalence of gender-based violence on campus.

Community-based interventions hold significant promise in minimizing GBV. Engaging with local organizations, community leaders, and other key stakeholders to challenge harmful gender norms, promote healthy masculinities, and empower marginalized groups can have a profound impact on reducing the prevalence of GBV (Michau et al., 2020). This collaborative approach helps to address the deeper sociocultural factors that perpetuate gender-based violence, such as rigid gender roles, power imbalances, and the normalization of violence. By partnering with diverse community members, institutions can develop tailored programs and initiatives that resonate with the local context and amplify the voices of those most affected by GBV. For example, community-based workshops and dialogues can provide a platform for critical discussions about the intersection of gender, power, and violence, while also highlighting the resilience and agency of survivors (Jewkes et al., 2022). Similarly, community outreach and advocacy campaigns can work to destigmatize help-seeking behaviors and connect individuals with the resources and support they need. Ultimately, this community-driven, holistic approach creates a more supportive environment for survivors and contributes to the long-term transformation of the societal norms and structures that enable gender-based violence (Ellsberg et al., 2022).

Intersectional approaches that consider the unique experiences and vulnerabilities of individuals and communities facing multiple, intersecting forms of marginalization are crucial in developing effective GBV-reduction strategies (Crenshaw, 2021). This includes addressing the ways in which factors such as race, class, disability, and immigration status compound the risks and impacts of GBV. For example, individuals from low-income backgrounds may face additional barriers in accessing support services or reporting incidents due to limited financial resources and transportation, while those with disabilities may encounter physical and attitudinal obstacles that prevent them from seeking help (Crenshaw, 2021). Similarly, undocumented immigrants or refugees may be hesitant to engage with authorities or mainstream institutions due to fears of deportation or further marginalization. By adopting an intersectional lens, GBV-reduction efforts can be tailored to meet the diverse needs of these communities, ensuring that support, resources, and prevention initiatives are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the specific challenges they face (Ellsberg et al.,

2022). This holistic, equity-driven approach is essential for addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and creating a more just, safe, and inclusive environment for all.

This holistic, equity-driven approach is essential for addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and creating a more just, safe, and inclusive environment for all. As the literature highlights, gender-based violence within academic communities is a complex, multifaceted issue rooted in intersecting systems of power, oppression, and sociocultural norms (Crenshaw, 2021; Jewkes et al., 2015). Interventions that solely target individual awareness or institutional policies have proven insufficient; rather, a comprehensive strategy is required (Ellsberg et al., 2022; Michau et al., 2015). Gender-based violence does not exist in a vacuum, but is instead shaped by the very structures and cultural attitudes that pervade our society. To meaningfully address this issue, universities must adopt a multilayered approach that simultaneously empowers individuals, transforms institutional practices, and challenges the broader social narratives that enable and perpetuate these forms of harm. This integrated, systems-level perspective is crucial for tackling the entrenched inequities at the heart of gender-based violence and cultivating a campus climate defined by safety, inclusion, and respect for all.

rioritize survivor-centered services and accountability, and community-based partnerships to reshape harmful social norms, universities can catalyze sustainable, systemic change (Heise, 2020; Moore et al., 2020). This intersectional, evidence-based approach represents a critical ethical imperative and a necessary step towards a more equitable and just future for all members of the academic community. Addressing gender-based violence through this multifaceted strategy is not only the right thing to do, but it also yields tangible benefits for the entire university ecosystem. When individuals feel safe, empowered, and supported, they are better able to thrive academically, socially, and professionally. Likewise, institutions that prioritize survivor wellbeing and promote a culture of respect and accountability foster more vibrant, inclusive learning environments that attract and retain top talent. Furthermore, by collaborating with local organizations and community stakeholders to transform harmful social norms, universities can catalyze broader societal change that extends far beyond their campus borders. Ultimately, this holistic, equity-driven approach represents a wise investment in the long-term health, vitality, and success of the academic community as a whole.

This holistic, equity-driven approach is essential for addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and creating a more just, safe, and inclusive environment for all. As the literature highlights, gender-based violence within academic communities is a complex, multifaceted issue rooted in intersecting systems of power, oppression, and sociocultural norms (Crenshaw, 2021; Jewkes et al., 2020). Interventions that solely target individual awareness or institutional policies have proven insufficient; rather, a comprehensive strategy is required (Ellsberg et al., 2022; Michau et al., 2020). By combining individual-level education and empowerment, institutional reforms that prioritize survivor-centered services and accountability, and community-based partnerships to reshape harmful social norms, universities can catalyze sustainable, systemic change (Heise, 2019; Moore et al., 2022). This intersectional, evidence-based approach represents a critical ethical imperative and a necessary step towards a more equitable and just future for all members of the academic community. At the individual level, programs that foster gender-equitable attitudes, enhance consent and healthy relationship skills, and provide bystander intervention training can empower community members to recognize and respond appropriately to instances of gender-based violence (Basile et al., 2020; Vladutiu et al., 2022). Simultaneously, institutions must strengthen comprehensive policies, reporting mechanisms, and support services that center the needs and experiences of survivors (Ahrens et al., 2022; DeGue et al., 2022). By empowering individuals to be active agents of change and providing them with the knowledge and skills to intervene, while also ensuring robust systems of accountability and support, universities can holistically address gender-based violence from multiple angles. Ultimately, this holistic, equity-driven approach represents a wise investment in the long-term health, vitality, and success of the academic community as a whole.

This holistic, equity-driven approach is essential for addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and creating a more just, safe, and inclusive environment (Crenshaw, 2022; Heise, 2022). Interventions that solely target individual awareness or institutional policies have proven insufficient; rather, a comprehensive strategy is required (Ellsberg et al., 2022; Michau et al., 2022). By combining individual-level education and empowerment, institutional reforms that prioritize survivor-centered services and accountability, and community-based partnerships to reshape harmful social norms, universities can catalyze sustainable, systemic change (Heise, 2022; Moore et al., 2022). This intersectional, evidence-based approach represents a critical ethical imperative and a necessary step towards a more equitable and just future. At the individual level, programs that foster gender-equitable

attitudes, enhance consent and healthy relationship skills, and provide bystander intervention training can empower community members to recognize and respond appropriately (Basile et al., 2022; Vladutiu et al., 2022), while institutions must strengthen comprehensive policies, reporting mechanisms, and support services that center the needs and experiences of survivors (Ahrens et al., 2022; DeGue et al., 2022).

2.5 Conclusion

Ultimately, the most effective approach to addressing gender-based violence within academic communities involves a comprehensive, intersectional strategy that combines individual, institutional, and community-based interventions. By enhancing individual awareness and response capabilities, strengthening institutional policies and survivor-centric services, and leveraging community partnerships to tackle sociocultural norms, universities can transform their campuses into safe, inclusive environments where all community members can learn, work, and thrive free from the threat of gender-based violence. This multifaceted, evidence based approach, grounded in an intersectional understanding of the complex drivers of GBV, represents a critical ethical imperative and a necessary step towards a more equitable and just future.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the research questions and also introduces the process through which collection, analysis, and processing of the data to be collected and used to accomplish the objectives of this research is carried out. In addition, the chapter outlines the techniques to be used to implement the research and gives an insight into the quality of all means to be used throughout the process.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy or plan that a researcher uses to conduct a research study. It is the framework that guides the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. The research design is a critical component of any research project, as it determines the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the findings.

Qualitative Research:

Qualitative research is an approach that focuses on understanding the meaning and experiences of research participants in their natural settings. This type of research involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The goal of qualitative research is to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations that drive human

behavior and decision-making. Researchers using a qualitative approach often employ inductive reasoning, allowing themes and patterns to emerge from the data, rather than testing predetermined hypotheses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative research is particularly useful for exploring complex social phenomena and providing rich, contextual insights that cannot be easily captured through quantitative methods alone (Patton, 2015).

Quantitative Research:

Quantitative research is an approach that focuses on the collection and analysis of numerical data to test hypotheses, establish relationships, and make predictions (Babbie, 2020). This type of research involves the use of structured data collection instruments, such as surveys and experiments, to gather information that can be analyzed using statistical techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The goal of quantitative research is to identify patterns, trends, and causal relationships among variables, allowing researchers to draw conclusions and generalize findings to a larger population (Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero, 2018). Quantitative research is particularly useful for measuring the magnitude and frequency of phenomena, as well as for testing the effectiveness of interventions or policies (Bryman, 2016).

The proposed study aims to examine the impact of gender-based violence awareness on academic performance among university students in Mukono District, Uganda, employing a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative techniques. The quantitative component will involve collecting numerical data through close-ended survey questions to describe and analyze the statistical relationships between gender-based violence awareness and academic performance, while the qualitative aspect will consist of open-ended interview questions to allow respondents to share their opinions, suggestions, and recommendations on the topic. Additionally, the study will use an inferential quantitative design to assess the association between gender-based violence awareness and academic performance. The research will be conducted at Uganda Christian University, a prominent academic institution in the Mukono District, and will utilize both primary and secondary data sources, including university records, academic performance reports, and relevant literature, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999).

3.2 Population of the Study.

The population will be composed of University administrators, and student leaders who will be purposively selected because of their task relevance as policy implementors. Students will

too be consulted by the faculty of Social Sciences specifically BGIR 3 having had an experience on the academic journey. These administrators will include one Dean of School of Social Sciences ,Head of Department ,Academic Co-ordinator and the Senior studentAdministrator and the Administrator.These student leaders will include education minister ,guild president ,gender minister, internal affair minister, MP resident. Social science Faculty is made up of both masters and undergraduate program. Masters is mostly conducted online while the undergraduate consists of BSWASA and BGIR . Its only BGIR that's consistent and helps to go through the research program without disruption and that's why I chose it.This study will comprise 70 respondents and out of 10 university administrators , I will get information from 6 people using questionnaires , out of 20 student leaders I will get information from 16 student leaders using questionnaires and out of 40 students ,I will get information from 30 students also using questionnaires as a data collection method. I have chosen questionnaires because they are efficient , standardized ,flexible. This will provide valuable insights and perspectives from the institutional and administrative standpoints, complementing the data collected from the student sample and allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of gender-based violence awareness on academics among university students in Mukono District, Uganda. By incorporating these diverse perspectives, the researchers aimed to gain a holistic analysis of the complex relationships between gender-based violence, awareness, and educational outcomes within the specific context of UCU and the broader Mukono District.

Table 3.2: Sample size

Categories of respondents	Population	Sample size	Sampling Technique	Frequency	Sampling Methods	Data collection method
University administrators	10	6	Purposive	12%	Purposive	Interviews
Student leaders	20	16	Random	31%	Purposive	Interviews
Students	40	30	Purposive	57%	Purposive	Interviews
Total	70	52		100%		

3.4 Data Sources

Primary sources: Primary data will help the researcher to have unused and fresh data for the determination of events. The researcher will directly reach out to the respondents through data collection instruments such as questionnaires.

Secondary sources: Document review related to the study, newspapers, online journals, and textbooks will be used such that the researcher is well equipped with the required data to facilitate the study.

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Data collection refers to the systematic process of collecting research data on a given phenomenon (Amin, 2005). The researcher will use both primary and secondary sources of data collection for the study.

3.6 Quality Control

3.6.1 Validity

Collis and Hussey, (2020), holds that validity of an instrument is the ability of the instrument to collect justifiable and truthful data; that is, measuring what it is developed to measure. The construction of the questionnaire will be based on the objectives of the study. Data collection instruments will be presented to the supervisor who will attest to the content validity of the instrument that is; the ambiguity of question items and their relevancy. The questionnaire will be pretested on 10 respondents in order to compute the content validity index. In cases where the average percentage is found to be above 0.7 (70%), the content is considered valid.

3.7 Ethical Issues.

A copy of the introductory letter from the University by the Faculty of education will be presented to ensure that the information obtained from research is for academic purposes. The researcher will ensure that participation will be voluntary and therefore will not force them. The researcher will also debrief the recipients before the data is collected from them. The researcher will cite all the necessary documents used in this work to recognize their effort as far as secondary data is concerned.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

Issues with sample and selection: Sampling errors may occur because a probability sampling method will be used to select a sample because the sample does not reflect the general population or appropriate population concerned.

Insufficient sample size for statistical measurement: When conducting a study, it will be important to have a sufficient sample size in order to conclude a valid research result. The sample may be too small, it will be difficult to identify significant relationships from the data because statistical tests require a larger sample size to ensure that the sample is considered

representative of a population and that the statistical result can be generalized to a larger population.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the responses and key findings from the respondents who were interviewed, The interviews were based on the research objectives from where the interview guide was derived. For matters of confidentiality, the interviewees' names are not given. The findings are synthesized based on themes that came up. Responses are bundled except a few of them which were outstanding .

4.1.1 Respondent personal characteristics

Table 1:Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	17	34%
Female	33	66%
Total	30	100%

The results in table 4. above show that the majority of the respondents were female (66%) while only 34% were male. The sample shows that the study was dominantly composed of females as they are the most affected by GBV.

4.2 The Conceptual Meaning of Gender-Based Violence Awareness.

The respondents were asked how they understood concept of gender based violence (GBV).

Below are the answers captured in table 4.3.

Table 2: Respondents understanding of gender-based violence.

Conceptual understanding of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sexual assault	22	44
Abuses	14	28
Torture	9	18
Demeaning words to women	6	12
Total	50	100%

According to these results in table 4.3, 44% of the respondents said that sexual assault is what they perceived of GBV. Other respondents at 28% acknowledged GBV as abuses towards women. Still, 18% of respondents perceived GBV as torture, while 12% said GBV was saying demeaning words to women.

Table 3: Respondents' answers about the forms of GBV.

Forms of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Physical abuse	16	32
Psychological abuse	7	14
Sexual abuse	27	54
Total	50	100%

Concerning the forms of GBV, 32% of the respondents said that physical abuse was a form of GBV, 54% said sexual abuse was the biggest form of GBV, while 14% of the respondents argued for psychological abuse as a form of GBV.

Table 4: Respondents' experience of gender-based violence.

Experiences of GBV	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sexually assaulted	21	42
Abused	19	38
Beaten up	10	20
Total	50	100%

Regarding the results on respondents' experience of GBV, 42% said they were sexually assaulted, 38% were abused. However, 20% of the respondents said that they were beaten up.

Table 5: Gender based violence forms.

Gender based forms	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Physical violence	25	50
Sexual violence	10	20
Emotional violence	15	30
Total	50	100

Source: primary data

From the interviews carried out with the selected respondents which were students, student leaders and administrators, they were asked the forms of gender based violence they know and their responses included the following:

Physical violence: This was the most said form of gender based violence cited by most number of respondents represented by a percentage of 50%. Physical violence involves the deliberate act of using physical force against someone causing them harm, injury or causing physical damage. Respondents pointed some actions like striking, slapping, kicking or other forms of aggressive physical contact. They added on that they can lead to permanent injuries leaving many hospitalized and in worst cases dead.

Emotional violence: This was the second form of gender based violence pointed out by 30% of the respondents. Emotional violence consists behaviors like verbal abuse, intimidation that

target a person’s emotional well being, eroding their self worth and confidence. Respondents said that although it doesn't end up in physical injury, it can have lasting effect on mental health leading issues like anxiety, depression or long term scars.

Sexual violence: This was the least form of gender based violence with only a percentage of 20% from the interviews carried on the respondents. Sexual violence refers to any form of sexual behavior or attempted behavior that involves force, intimidation including acts like rape, unwanted sexual contact. Respondents said that this type of violence can inflict profound harm on the victim, resulting into severe physical, emotional, and psychological trauma.

“.....all forms of physical violence are completely unacceptable and have far reaching consequences, causing both physical harm and long long lasting emotional trauma..” **student**

“.....we must work together to establish a culture that rejects sexual violence and encourages survivors to come out providing them with the support and resources they need to heal and move on...” **student leader**

“.....we will continue in providing essential resources and counselling support t help students overcome emotional violence,fostering a community that values kindness,understanding , and mutual support...” **administrator**

Table 6: Causes of Gender Based violence on Academics amongst university students at UCU

Causes of GBV on academics	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Cultural and Social norms	5	10
Lack of awareness and education	12	24
Peer influence and social pressure	33	66
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

From the interviews carried out with the selected respondents which were students, student leaders and administrators, they were asked about causes of GBV on academics amongst university students at UCU and these were their responses

Cultural and Social norms: This was the least pointed out cause of GBV on academics by respondents and was represented by 10%. Rigid gender roles, deeply ingrained in societal and cultural norms, can create power disparities. Respondents pointed out that these put university students at risk of gender-based violence as men are often socialized to assert dominance and women to assume submissive roles.

Lack of awareness and education: This cause was the second and it was represented by 24% of the respondents. Education plays a vital role in preventing GBV amongst university students. Respondents said that without it, students may remain unaware of their rights, perpetuate damaging stereotypes and lack the critical thinking skills necessary for constructive communication and conflict resolution thus increasing the risk of violence.

Peer influence and social pressure: This was the most pointed out cause of gender based violence amongst university students and represented by 66% of the respondents. The influence of peers and social pressure can contribute to gender based violence on university students by validating harmful actions and promoting toxic masculinity. Respondents said that this pressure can make individuals adopt violent behaviors to fit in, intimidate victims into silence and deter reporting hence ultimately creating a culture that promotes gender based violence.

".....the fear of social exclusion or desire to belong can lead us to adopt behaviors that contribute to gender based violence even they are against our values. Its tough to be the only voice of dissent when your peers are actively participating in condemning harmful actions...."
student.

".....we understand the necessity of providing students with comprehensive education programs that address gender based violence ,its academic consequences and prevention methods installing in them necessary tools to recognize ,respond to ,and ultimately eliminate gender based violence....."
student leader.

Table 7: Barriers that affect a students awareness of gender based violence on academics.

Barriers of GBV awareness on academics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Limited access to resources	25	50
Stigma andshame	14	28
Lack of safe reporting mechanisms	11	22
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

From the interviews carried out with the selected respondents which were students, student leaders and administrators, they were asked about barriers that affect a students awareness of gender based violence on academics and below were there responses.

Limited assess to resources : This barrier was represented by the highest percentage 50% of the respondents. Insufficient access to critical resources such as counseling services, educational materials and support networks can limit students ability to recognize, address and overcome gender based violence. Respondents added that it hinders their academic progress and engagement, the resource gap can leave the students unsupported and very vulnerable in the face of gender based violence.

Stigma and Shame: This barrier was represented by 28% of the respondents and it was the second pointed out barrier that affect a students awareness of gender based violence on academics. The stigma and shame associated with gender based violence make students stay silent causing them to hesitate in reporting or discussing incidents resulting in significant under reporting of cases and a lack of awareness among their peers. Student leaders further

noted that the fear of being judged or facing negative consequences prevents open dialogues and hinders a lot the development of educational initiatives in academic environments.

Lack of safe reporting mechanisms: This was the least barrier pointed out by 22% of the respondents. The absence of secure and confidential reporting channels deters students from sharing their experiences of gender based violence due to concerns about social stigma. Respondents added that as a result incidents go un reported limiting the institutions capacity to respond, educate and raise awareness about gender based violence.

".....i think the major problem is the lack of open conversation and visibility surrounding gender based violence. Without active discussion and sharing of information from our classes and administration it's difficult for us students to stay informed and engaged on the topic....." **student**

".....the occurrence of gender based violence in our communities can lead to a sense of normalization making it challenging for students to recognize its acuteness and speak against it. Cultural norms and personal beliefs can sustain this silence downplaying the importance of addressing the issue....." **student leader**

".....the busy life of students which is filled with academic commitments work and family responsibilities might prevent them from attending gender based violence events and seminars. To deal with this we need to develop more accessible strategies to capture their attention and encourage participation....." **administrator**

Table 9 : Factors influencing the occurrence of gender based violence awareness on academics

Factors influencing	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Institutional failures	10	20%
Isolation and stress	16	32%
Digital and social media influence	13	26%
Economic dependency	11	22%
Total	50	100

Source: *Primary data*

Institutional failures: This factor was represented by 20% of respondents. Shortcomings in institutional measures including insufficient policies, inadequate enforcement of existing protocols and insufficient staff training affects the raise of awareness about gender based violence. One respondent noted that students receive inadequate education on their rights and available support services leaving them ill equipped to effectively prevent incidents of gender based violence.

Isolation and Stress: this factor was the most pointed out and was represented by 32% respondents. Respondents cited that the emotional strain of university life including academic pressure can lead to harmful behaviors or increase students vulnerability to exploitation as they may struggle to cope with their emotional distress.

Digital and Social media: This factor was represented by 26% a reasonable number of respondents who believe that it has led to the emergence of new forms of gender based violence. Some respondents noted that cyber bullying online sexual harassment and non consensual sharing of intimate images has posed significant challenges in the digital landscape.

Economic dependency: This was the least pointed out factor represented by 22% respondents. Most respondents noted that students who rely on others for financial support may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation or abusive relationships as their economic dependence can be leveraged as a means of control.

“.....victims of gender based violence of experience a lot of stress and feelings of loneliness due to inadequate access to mental health resources worsening their emotional stress.....” **student leader**

“.....we recognize that shortcomings in our institutional policies and procedures have inadvertently enabled the persistence of gender based violence and are actively addressing these gaps to strengthen our response.....” **administrator**

Table 10: Gender based awareness levels amongst students at Uganda Christian University

Awareness levels	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Active participation	21	42%
Limited knowledge	18	36%
Student led initiatives	11	22%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

Active participation: This was the most pointed out awareness level and it was represented by 42% respondents. They cited that students who actively participate in educational initiatives such as workshops , campaigns, seminars bring out a greater understanding of gender based violence and its dynamics. Respondents pointed out that those engaging in programs empower students with knowledge and skills to recognise , prevent and respond to gender based violence.

Limited knowledge: It was the second awareness level that was pointed out and was represented by 36% respondents. A number of students lack a good understanding of gender based violence and it comes from the limited access to educational materials or inadequate outreach efforts. This knowledge gap leaves some students uninformed and unprepared to address, respond to gender based violence.

Student led initiatives: This awareness level was represented by 22% respondents. They noted that this aspect plays a vital role in promoting awareness and driving change with actively engaged students making a profound impact on campus culture their initiatives help shape a more informed and supportive community.

“.....while student led initiatives have shown promise,a more institutionalized approach to education and training is necessary to effectively combat gender based violence and foster a culture of awareness understanding,and support on campus.....” administrator

“.....although many students participate in awareness initiatives,we identify a need for comprehensive training and support to empower student leaders with expertise and resource required to tackle the f gender based violence depth and fill the gaps in understanding.....” student leader.

Table 11: Strategies Uganda Christain University can implement to minimise gender based violence.

Strategies to minimize	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Regular assessments	5	10
Policy development	15	30
Support services	8	16
Awareness campaigns	22	44
Total	50	100%

Source: *primary source*

Regular assessments: This was the least pointed strategy and was represented by 10% respondents. They cited that regular monitoring and evaulating strategies can enable them identify areas of improvement and adopt to changing circumstances and implement targeted strategies in addressing gender based violence.

Policy development was highly recommended by respondents and it was represented by 30% of the respondents. Some pointed out that establishing and implementing comprehensive

and transparent policies can help prevent and respond to gender based violence including reporting investigating and resolving incidents.

Support services: This was represented by 16% of the respondents and they cited that offering and actively promoting a range of confidential support services for survivors of gender based violence providing emotional support through counselling and expert legal guidance helps empowering them to recover.

Awareness campaigns: This strategy was the most advocated for or pointed out by the respondents and it was represented by 22%. They noted that conduction of regular wide searching awareness campaigns help in informing and engaging students and staff on the issues surrounding gender based violence including its indicators consequences and prevention techniques.

*“.....we need secure , confidential and accessible environments where we can freely report incidents and receive counselling support. On going open and honest conversations between students and administration are also crucial in promoting mutual understanding and addressing our concerns.....”***student**

*“.....to promote a safe and inclusive university community, we must establish and enforce clear policies against gender based violence, provide thorough training for staff and students and enhance campus security. A zero tolerance approach is needed and it will in creating an environment where everyone feels protected.....”***administrator.**

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINDINGS.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of major findings in chapter four and draws conclusions and recommendations of the findings concerning the effect of gender-based violence awareness on academic performance amongst university students in Mukono District. The results are discussed in relation to the study objectives.

5.2 Discussion of the findings

5.2.1 The Conceptual Meaning of Gender-Based Violence Awareness.

The respondents were asked how they understood concept of gender based violence (GBV). According to these results, 44% of the respondents said that sexual assault is what they perceived of GBV. Other respondents at 28% acknowledged GBV as abuses towards women. Still, 18% of respondents perceived GBV as torture, while 12% said GBV was saying demeaning words to women. Concerning the forms of GBV, 32% of the respondents said that physical abuse was a form of GBV, 54% said sexual abuse was the biggest form of GBV, while 14% of the respondents argued for psychological abuse as a form of GBV. Regarding the results on respondents' experience of GBV, 42% said they were sexually assaulted, 38% were abused. However, 20% of the respondents said that they were beaten up.

In relation to the results above, the studies show that gender-based violence is violence that is directed against an individual or group of individuals based on their gender (Cruz and Klinger, 2020). In other words, it encompasses violence against women and girls as well as violence

against men and boys. When the topic of gender-based violence is brought up, most people always exclude men and boys yet they are also greatly affected by this aspect that is some men are always beaten up but they don't forward these cases because society will look at them as weak men.

In particular, gender-based is defined as acts of violence rooted in some form of patriarchal ideology to maintain social power for men. (Council of Europe,2021). In this case, GBV is referred to as violence inflicted on individuals primarily women and girls as a means of maintaining male dominance and control within society. This violence can manifest in various forms like physical, sexual, emotional, or economic abuse.

In addition, the (UN Nations, 2020) defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

When the respondents were asked about the effects of GBV on their academics, 28% reported that the fear of being known affected their academics. 322% of the respondents said that they lacked concentration on their studies. Yet, 18% of the respondents contended that they completely lost in their studies. In interviews, the university expressed knowledge of the concept of GBV.

On the issue of GBV awareness, the student leaders argued that the phenomenon of underreporting gender-based violence is complex and gives a hint on the prevalence and normalization of gender-based violence. They posited that relationships and interrelations of constructions constitutes perpetration and victimhood. They argued that victims of gender-based violence say that they do not know what to do because of trauma and lack of information where to report the case. Their view was supported by many of the students

interviewed that victims of gender-based violence are often not sure where to report and what processes to follow. This seem to suggest that lack of clarity about university procedures to report gender-based violence contribute to underreporting.

Some students explained that students do not know where to report gender-based violence because of confusion, and hopelessness. Yet others argued that emotions such as shame; fear of being negatively judged by parents, family, friends and the community; fear of stigmatization; and fear of reprisal attacks from the perpetrators play a role in underreporting of gender-based violence.

5.2.2 Factors influencing the occurrence of gender-based violence awareness on academics.

The respondents were asked to explain the factors influencing the occurrence of gender-based violence awareness on academics. According to the results, 34% of the respondents identified alcohol as the cause of GBV amongst university community. 32% gave friendships as the cause of GBV. 26% of the respondents pointed to cultural disorder as the cause. However, only 8% said it ignorance of law that was the cause of GBV at campus. Concerning the results about the barriers that affect students' awareness of GBV, 32% pointed to cultural conditions, 28% talked about fear of dismissal from university, 24% identified perpetration by friends while accused the failure of university to punish offenders.

From the interviews with students, students' leaders and university administrators, it was established that in most GBV instances, victims and assailants know each other as friends, acquaintances, or people they go out with. The abuse of alcohol known for socialization on campuses contribute to the burden experienced by victims and the subsequent unlikelihood to report gender-based violence. Besides, students revealed that victims of gender-based violence who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs during GBV are less likely to report

their victimization to university authorities or Police or any other law enforcement agencies because their cases may be dismissed especially when there is no physical assault involved.

University administrators said that failure to report GBV is one of the key factors contributing to the perpetuation of the scourge which is not helping the cause of fighting this societal disorder. The university administrators said that the situation is worsened by institutional barriers and poor reporting procedures hence a perpetuation of GBV. They argued that some universities often downplay the magnitude of the menace of GBV on their campuses.

In agreement with the results, secondary research suggests that individual-level factors play a significant role in shaping GBV awareness within academic communities. Academics from marginalized gender backgrounds, who have directly experienced or witnessed GBV, tend to exhibit higher levels of awareness compared to those from privileged gender groups (Sabri et al., 2022). This is because those who have been affected by GBV, either through their own lived experiences or close exposure, develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts, and complexities surrounding gender-based violence. They are more attuned to recognizing the various manifestations of GBV, the barriers that victims and survivors face, and the urgent need for effective prevention and response strategies.

In contrast, academics from dominant gender groups may lack this firsthand perspective and may have internalized societal norms that downplay or normalize certain forms of GBV (Flood & Pease, 2022). Moreover, those who have received targeted education, training, or professional development on GBV are better equipped to identify, address, and advocate against these issues within academic contexts. This underscores the importance of providing all students with opportunities to enhance their GBV awareness through interdisciplinary

coursework, workshops, and other learning experiences that center the perspectives of marginalized genders.

4.4 Gender-based awareness levels amongst students at UCU.

Concerning GBV awareness levels amongst students at UCC, the results show that 38% of the respondents identified the university reluctance to punish offenders as a factor contributing to the occurrence of GBV on campus. 32% pointed to cultural bias against women as the factor responsible for occurrence of GBV at campus, while 18% identified women compromise and silence as the factors for occurrence of GBV at campus and 12% said that girls or women feared to be victimized.

In connection with the awareness of existing policies that curb GBV at university, 80% said they were aware of the existing policies that curb GBV at university, while 20% confessed that they were not aware of the existing policies that curb GBV at university. In regard to the results on respondents' responses on effectiveness of existing policies that curb GBV at university, 38% said they were not effective, 26% said they were quite effective. Yet, 205 argued that they did not know whether such policies were effective or not, while 16% revealed that such policies were very effective. Regarding the results on respondents' strategies the university can implement to mitigate GBV, 36% suggested punishing offenders, 24% offered community response. Yet, 22% proposed awareness campaigns at campus and 18% proposed identification of vulnerable women for help.

In interviews, students argued that they were fully aware of GBV at the campus. Some students argued that usually the reaction from males in university authority, on sexual violence targeting girls has sometimes been casual. University administrators said that GBV against female students is a salient issue and women who attend university campuses are the main victims. They said that they were aware that prevalence of GBV is still alarmingly high

in educational institutions. They said that the prevalence of sexual violence among female higher education students was escalating.

In agreement with the above results, literature reviewed shows that students and their leaders identified institutional factors that influence the likelihood of victims/ survivors reporting incidents of GBV (Flood & Pease, 2022). Where an institution does not provide clarity on what constitutes GBV, staff and students are less likely to report incidents. They argued that they were aware that incidents of GBV become normalized and accepted and are not perceived as necessitating reporting.

Alternatively, they said that where individuals do understand that they have been victimized, they perceive that their institution would not take their case seriously, or respond meaningfully and quickly to their report, individuals are less likely to report the incident (Sabri et al., 2022).

5.2.3 Strategies to curb or minimize gender based violence.

Several strategies to curb GBV were pointed out by the respondents. They said that responses should also engage community-based engagement to enhance awareness, and socio-network and promote role models. Direct involvement if the community brings in positive results as the community knows better what they need and can easily pinpoint victims. Other respondents said that the devastating effects can be mitigated not only by professional responses but also by the contributions of paraprofessionals and community workers. Community leaders play a key role in setting standards for acceptable behaviour and implementing justice for women.

Several approaches are effective for at least one form of violence and may be effective across multiple forms of violence. Therefore, different responses can be used to solve different cases of violence. Eliminating violence is critical and vital for achieving the SDG health targets. An

effective response should include coordinated community response, coordinated community response programs engage the whole community and entire community efforts to bring out an enhanced understanding of violence against women. Involving the community brings awareness and enables first-hand information to be retrieved.

According to the literature reviewed, there is some resemblance. At the individual level, enhancing GBV awareness and education is a crucial starting point. Providing students, faculty, and staff with comprehensive training on the dynamics of GBV can help cultivate a deeper understanding of this pervasive issue. This training should cover the various manifestations of GBV, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse, as well as the unique challenges and experiences of survivors (Jewkes et al., 2020). By gaining insights into the power imbalances, societal norms, and systemic barriers that enable GBV, individuals can develop greater sensitivity and empathy towards those affected (Michau et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the training should empower participants to recognize the warning signs of GBV, such as controlling behaviors, isolation, and sudden changes in demeanor or academic performance (Ellsberg et al., 2022). Equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to respond appropriately, whether by providing immediate support, reporting incidents, or connecting survivors with crucial services, can be a crucial step in breaking the cycle of violence and ensuring that survivors receive the care and resources they need (Crenshaw, 2021). Ultimately, this multi-faceted approach to individual-level GBV awareness and education can foster a campus community that is better equipped to prevent, identify, and effectively address gender-based violence.

Institutional-level strategies are equally important in curbing GBV. Higher education institutions should implement robust GBV prevention and response policies that outline clear

protocols for reporting, investigation, and disciplinary measures (Ellsberg et al., 2022). These policies should be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and community partners, to ensure they are comprehensive, survivor-centric, and tailored to the unique needs and contexts of the institution. Alongside these policies, institutions must provide accessible, survivor-centric support services, such as counseling, legal aid, and medical assistance, to ensure that survivors have the resources and care they need to heal and recover (Ellsberg et al., 2022). Additionally, institutions should foster a culture of accountability, where GBV is unequivocally condemned and all members of the community are empowered to be active bystanders and advocates (Michau et al., 2015). This involves consistent messaging from leadership, comprehensive training for the entire campus community, and a commitment to swiftly and transparently addressing any incidents of GBV. By implementing these multifaceted, institution-wide strategies, higher education institutions can create an environment that prioritizes prevention, promotes survivor well-being, and holds perpetrators accountable, ultimately working to curb and minimize the prevalence of gender-based violence on campus.

Community-based interventions hold significant promise in minimizing GBV. Engaging with local organizations, community leaders, and other key stakeholders to challenge harmful gender norms, promote healthy masculinities, and empower marginalized groups can have a profound impact on reducing the prevalence of GBV (Michau et al., 2020). This collaborative approach helps to address the deeper sociocultural factors that perpetuate gender-based violence, such as rigid gender roles, power imbalances, and the normalization of violence. By partnering with diverse community members, institutions can develop tailored programs and initiatives that resonate with the local context and amplify the voices of those most affected by GBV. For example, community-based workshops and dialogues can provide a platform for

critical discussions about the intersection of gender, power, and violence, while also highlighting the resilience and agency of survivors (Jewkes et al., 2022).

Similarly, community outreach and advocacy campaigns can work to destigmatize help-seeking behaviors and connect individuals with the resources and support they need. Ultimately, this community-driven, holistic approach creates a more supportive environment for survivors and contributes to the long-term transformation of the societal norms and structures that enable gender-based violence (Ellsberg et al., 2022).

5.3 Conclusions

1. The study concludes that respondents clearly understood concept of gender based violence (GBV) as sexual assault, abuses towards women, torture, and physical abuse as most of them experienced GBV through being sexually assaulted, were abused and being beaten up.

2. The study established that the students were highly ware of GBV and identified several factors responsible for it as the university reluctance to punish offenders as a factor contributing to the occurrence of GBV on campus, cultural bias against women as well as women compromise and silence and fear by women to be victimized.

3. The study concluded that the factors influencing the occurrence and impact of gender-based violence awareness on academics included alcohol, friendships, ignorance of law and barriers such as cultural conditions, fear of dismissal from university, perpetration by friends and failure of university to punish offenders.

3. Several strategies to curb GBV were pointed out by the respondents. They said that responses should also engage community-based engagement to enhance awareness, and socio-network and promote role models. Direct involvement if the community brings in positive results as the community knows better what they need and can easily pinpoint

victims. Other respondents said that the devastating effects can be mitigated not only by professional responses but also by the contributions of paraprofessionals and community workers. Community leaders play a key role in setting standards for acceptable behaviour and implementing justice for women.

5.4 Recommendations

Primary approaches and interventions should be done at the early stages mainly to change behaviours and attitudes towards women and ensure successful interventions and prevention of violence instead of focusing on the aftermath of the violence. Research has to be done on the beliefs and norms of different communities to do as to implement the right response because what may work for one community may not work for another.

Social-ecological reviews of violence, intervention, theory models based on evidence acquired and finally aspirational programming should be implemented. This means that response should not be at individual level only but also should include the society because different systems work together to subordinate women.

Early intervention and response should be enhanced in order to have the potential to reduce the rate and number of victims at the population level. Based on early childhood mistreatment, violence can occur in future as a result of imitating what happened during childhood hence all interventions.

Women who are at a high risk of violence should be identified using race ethnicity and age. Government should work out issues that subordinate women by spotting out the political social and economic structures. Tackling violence against women shouldn't be seen as an option it should be added to health programs and social programs of the country.

The police have always to maintain law and order and arrest and investigate cases. The victims or the community are encouraged from reporting to the police or LC court because of the costs involved.

Police needs to be trained on how to handle such cases and properly supervised because they can be used as a channel for fighting violence against women. The corruption in the system needs to be monitored so as victims can easily report cases of violence instead of staying silent.

Extensive training should be done to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to handle cases of violence in the universit. Girls should be encouraged to report cases to university authorities.

Counselling has to be effectively used to comfort victims of violence. Counselling is to be at the individual level and at times to include the family members of the battered female student.

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