Couples' Economic Equilibrium, Gender Norms and Intimate Partner Violence in

Kirumba, Tanzania

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Abstract

This study examines the link between the loss of men's status as breadwinners and their use of intimate partner violence in Kirumba (Mwanza city, Tanzania), mediated by the entry of women into the cash work force. Using qualitative data from 20 in-depth interviews and 8 focus groups with men (n=58) and women (n=58), this paper explores how the existing gender-related social norm linked to male breadwinning was threatened when women were forced to enter into paid work (linked to the family's impoverishment) and how these changes eventually increased partner violence. The study draws implications for IPV reduction strategies in patriarchal contexts experiencing declining economic opportunities for men.

Keywords: Gender norms, Women's Income Generation, Intimate Partner Violence, Tanzania, Qualitative Research

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Introduction

Gender and development researchers have long argued that economic changes in low and

middle-income countries affect gendered family relations at the household level (Banerjee, 1998;

Duflo, 2012; Kabeer, 2016). A World Bank report documenting the "Voices of the Poor" from

Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern and Central Asia, describes how due to

male employment and economic insecurity, women felt under great pressure to seek paid work

(Deepa, Chambers, Shah, & Petesch, 2000). Structural threats to traditional gender roles and

relations can create tension within spousal relationships, affecting men's perpetration and

women's risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) in contrasting ways (Vyas, Mbwambo, & Heise,

2015). In some settings, women's increased earnings have led to a reduction in IPV. In others,

IPV increased as a result of men's frustration for not complying with masculinity norms that

assigned them the role of primary breadwinners (Deepa et al., 2000). Some studies suggested

that men who cannot live up to social expectations of what 'successful' manhood entails may use

violence to reclaim the power that they feel they have lost alongside the role of breadwinners

(Gelles, 1972; Goode, 1971; R. Jewkes, 2002). There is a dearth of empirical data, however, that

elaborates on this relation between changes in couple's economic equilibrium and men's

perpetration of IPV (Padilla, Hirsch, Muñoz-Laboy, Sember, & Parker, 2007).

This study investigates this relation, specifically looking at how, in Tanzania, decreases

in men's revenue, coupled with women's entry into paid labour, affected men's use of IPV.

Current evidence suggests 30% of ever-partnered Tanzanian women aged 15-49 have

experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past year (National Bureau

of Statistics 2015-2016). The economic crisis in Tanzania and the resulting Structural

Adjustment Plan implemented in the late 1980s and early 1990s increased households' need for

cash. These policies raised the general cost of living, exacerbating poverty (Lugalla, 1997). State

spending cuts linked to these policies, particularly in areas such as education and health, led to

reductions in household incomes (Mbilinyi, 1993). In addition to these changes, employment

rates dropped dramatically in the 1980s; currently only a small fraction of men are employed in

the formal sector (Silberschmidt, 2004). In response to these economic challenges, an increasing

number of Tanzanian women have sought paid work, most commonly in the informal sector

(Mascarenhas, 2007). Kabeer (2016) observed that norms regarding men's role as family

breadwinner are pervasive across cultures and that women's entrance into this sphere is likely to

trigger violence, a dynamic previously observed in certain areas of Tanzania (Gross, Mayumana,

& Obrist, 2013; Laisser, Nyström, Lugina, & Emmelin, 2011; Mosha, Ruben, & Kakoko, 2013;

Silberschmidt, 2001). This dynamic is often reinforced by religion and women's unequal access

to resources and is sustained by powerful gender norms held in place by the anticipation of

negative sanctions for transgressors (Ellis, 2007; Feinstein, Feinstein, & Sabrow, 2010; Howland

& Koenen, 2014; Laisser et al., 2011). Gender norms can shape the social expectation that men

should be breadwinners and that women should submit to men's authority; compliance with the

latter norm is sometimes ensured by the threat of violence (or actual violence) (Mascarenhas,

2007; McCleary-Sills et al., 2016).

Gender Norms and Intimate Partner Violence

Gender norms are unspoken rules shared by people in a given society or group; they define what

is considered 'normal' or appropriate behaviour for men and women (Bicchieri, 2006; Cislaghi,

2018; Cislaghi & Heise, 2018; Mackie, 1996; Paluck, 2009; Prentice, 2012). They are people's beliefs about what others in their group find acceptable for men and women. These beliefs may or may not correspond to reality. For instance, while one might believe that others in their group would disapprove of women who leave the household unaccompanied, in reality, others would not object to them doing so. People comply with gender norms as they seek to obtain social rewards (positive sanctions) and avoid social punishments (negative sanctions) (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). Positive and negative sanctions include, for example, admiration or contempt, verbal approval or disapproval, praise or rebuke, and compliment or insult, among other things (Mackie, Moneti, & Shakya, 2015).

Not all gender norms are harmful, but some (oppressive) gender norms contribute to keeping in place an unequal gender system. They are reinforced across social and educational institutions, both in the home and outside, via politics, media, and religious institutions. In the realm of division of labour, in particular, significant social categories such as 'female' or 'male' seem to become pointedly relevant; the result is that sex strikes people as a natural kind of category, with men being perceived as possessing an essential nature that is different from that of women (Fiske, Gilbert, & Lindzey, 2010). By enacting gender norms in their daily actions and interactions, individuals simultaneously sustain, reproduce and render legitimate the institutional arrangements that are based on sex category (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Several studies have found that oppressive gender norms are key factors contributing to IPV (Garcia-Moreno, Heise, Jansen, Ellsberg, & Watts, 2005; R. Jewkes, 2002; R. Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015). They reflect and reproduce men and women's (often unequal) access to resources and freedoms, thus affecting women's and men's voices, agency and power (Sen,

Ostlin, & George, 2007). IPV evolves in part from such gender power inequities operating at both a relationship and societal level (Anderson, 2005; R. Jewkes et al., 2015; Seguino, 2013). The links between gender inequitable norms and IPV lie in the patriarchal ideology of society and ideals of masculinity that grant men authority in the family, thereby celebrating male strength and justifying male control over female behaviour (R. K. Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, & Shai, 2010; Laisser et al., 2011). These ideologies make it legitimate for men (especially husbands) to discipline women when they transgress female gender norms, potentially using violence to do so (R. Jewkes, 2002).

The aim of this study was to investigate the link between oppressive gender norms and men's use of IPV within the context of narrowing economic opportunities for men in Kirumba, a district in Mwanza city (Tanzania). Examining how partnership dynamics evolve as a result of contextual forces is critical for policy makers, NGOs, and activists who seek to reduce partner violence in settings where women and men's gender roles are shifting in unprecedented ways. Our analysis contributes to the literature on the relationship between women's paid work and their experience of IPV by exploring the specific partnership dynamics that give rise to women's paid work, and in particular, how men fare in these circumstances.

Methods

In this study, we sought to explore how a change in household economic conditions can threaten gender norms and affect men's perpetration of partner violence. Qualitative research can be particularly appropriate to explore people's lived experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences. In particular, we conducted a qualitative exploration of men's use of violence in Mwanza, Tanzania's second largest city. The city had recently undergone a rapid change, with many women entering the informal labour force for the first time, a space previously dominated

by men. Current evidence suggests that 68.3% of women in Mwanza over the age of 15 are part of the labour force (National Bureau of Statistics 2014-2015). In addition, recent evidence suggests that in Mwanza, 37% of ever-partnered women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past year (National Bureau of Statistics 2015-2016), a figure that is seven percent higher than the national estimate described earlier. Specifically, we conducted data collection in Kirumba, a ward in Mwanza where 26% of the population live below the basic needs poverty line ("Tanzania Poverty and Human Development Report 2005," 2005).

Study Participants

The logic of sampling in qualitative research is to find individuals who can provide rich perspectives, varied insights, and meaningful views on the phenomenon under study(Bradley, 1993; Yilmaz, 2013). Participants in this study included 58 men and 58 women aged between 15-24-years and 35-50-years, living in Kirumba, Mwanza (Tanzania). We chose participants of different ages and sexes to explore similarities and differences in the gender norms of these sub-groups, as well as their effect on women's experience of IPV. We were alerted to the need of sampling across generations by recent findings on how gender norms had relaxed among young Tanzanian men, who now accepted of women having activities outside of the household (Boudet, Petesch, & Turk, 2013). Whereas we did not observe meaningful differences between younger and older adults in the particular themes presented in our analysis, we explore normative variations – linked to IPV – across generations elsewhere (In preparation: Age-related differences in abused women's help seeking pathways in Tanzania).

All participants were in intimate relationships, which included dating relationships and spousal relationships (i.e. marriages). In order to identify and recruit participants, we were

officially introduced by the Ward Executive Officer (WEO) of Kirumba to street leaders (the

government representatives of each street), also known as the Mtaa Executive Officers (MEOs),

given their connections to the local population. The MEOs then engaged street 'helpers' (the

representatives of the MEOs), who live amongst the communities, to contact eligible individuals

and invite them to participate in the study. Only one participant from each household was

recruited to protect participants' safety and confidentiality. Most participants were self-employed

and worked in the informal service sector, including in agriculture, petty trade and commerce,

carpentry and in the sale of uncooked food such as fruit and vegetables (see Table 1 in Appendix

for participant demographics).

Data Collection

The first author recruited and trained six local interviewers (three men and three women) to

collect the data. All the interviews were conducted in Swahili and were audio-recorded. We

conducted eight focus group discussions, each with between 9 and 14 participants, to elicit men

and women's shared understandings of perceived norms and their role in perpetuating violence.

In addition to the focus groups, we conducted 20 semi-structed interviews to explore personal

experiences of violence or perpetration that participants might not be comfortable to share in

focus groups.

The focus group guide included a mix of a vignette and open-ended questions. Vignettes

are short scenarios in pictorial or written form intended to elicit perceptions and opinions by

asking participants to respond to the scenario, or by asking how they imagine characters in the

story would react (Barter & Renold, 1999). They have the benefit of building on the oral

tradition of storytelling, and they allow people to talk about sensitive subjects without having to

discuss their own personal situations (Ellsberg, Heise, & Organization, 2005). Several different

vignettes were employed in each sample group to explore the processes through which gender norms sustain IPV in Tanzania. Each vignette was followed by a series of open-ended questions. Vignette 1 (See Table 2 in Appendix) contained probes to specifically elicit perceptions of how traditional gender roles linked to the household distribution of labour are negotiated when women leave the house in search of paid work, including the context of women's paid work, and whether this change ever manifested in partner violence.

The individual interviews included open-ended, semi-structured questions to elicit how respondents described their intimate relationships and to analyse if personal experiences diverged from group accounts. The questions were broad and consisted of probes on whether individuals were working in paid employment, including the nature of the work; how the community and male partners responded to women's engagement in paid work; whether individuals were aware of cases of partner violence in the community, and their personal experiences of violence, including the reasons; and how individuals and the community responded to violence.

Protection of human subjects

Ethical approval was obtained from the Lake Zone Institutional Review Board in Mwanza. The local interviewers who were recruited for the study were trained to strictly adhere to the WHO Safety and Ethical Guidelines for Researching VAW (Ellsberg et al., 2005) and they did not report any signs of distress from the participants interviewed. Indeed, essential to preventing participant distress are the interviewers' interviewing skills and the code of ethics (Corbin & Morse, 2003). As a contingency measure, the female interviewers also practised diverting attention away from violence to a more neutral topic such as breastfeeding in case a male partner were to walk in during an interview being held at the participant's home. Numbers were used in

the group discussions instead of names to maintain participant anonymity. In addition to written consent, oral consent was sought twice from the participants–once before beginning the interview and once shortly after the voice recorder was turned on. In order for eligible individuals under the age of 18 to participate in the study (i.e. between the ages of 15-17 as per the sampling criteria), we prepared separate consent forms for parents and/or guardians to be completed in advance of the individual and group interviews . Stamp pads were available for illiterate participants. The recordings were kept secure and deleted once they were crosschecked against the translated transcripts. The participants were offered booklets with contact details of appropriate service providers in case they required further help. The interviewers also provided their phone numbers for follow-up opportunities and to be of avail to illiterate participants who may have little use for the booklets.

Data analysis

We used thematic analysis to identify the broader assumptions and meanings reflected in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the first step of the analysis, we read and re-read the transcripts to familiarise ourselves with the data. Next, we coded the data without trying to fit them into a pre-existing coding frame. Since we were concerned with addressing a specific research question, we coded each segment of data that was relevant or captured an interesting aspect about our research question. We developed and modified the codes as we worked through the coding process. In the third step, we grouped similar codes together to obtain a preliminary set of descriptive themes. In the fourth step, we applied these preliminary themes to the entire data set. We then read the data associated with each theme to consider the extent to which the data supported themes, and we took note of disconfirming evidence and modified our themes. In the fifth step, we looked at how these themes related to one another and pieced together the overarching narrative of the data to

answer the research question. In the final step of the analysis, we interpreted this narrative and discussed in relation to existing knowledge on socio-economic change and risk of partner violence.

Findings

Participants described the links between men's failure to provide and IPV, highlighting the following four key categories of importance: 1) how households functioned according to collective and rigid beliefs that men should be the breadwinners in the family; 2) how this traditional male gender role was changing, mediated by women's entry into paid labour ; 3) how third parties played a crucial role in enforcing the role of the male breadwinner; and, 4) how the loss of the male breadwinner status was linked to increasing tension in the household.

"The man should…provide for his family"

In Kirumba, men were strictly expected to be the family breadwinners. Participants mostly offered two justifications for men's role, the first based on biological assumptions linked to the male sex and the second based on marital expectations. References to the former mainly centred on the idea that men must fulfil their 'natural' position as household head, as explained by this 45-year-old man in an individual interview:

> Normally, the way God has created us (men)…the sole decision maker is the man,
> and it is especially with regards to income. It is the man that should have the income
> to provide for his family. The woman shouldn't have the income. The woman is
> under the authority of a man…and that is why the woman doesn't make decisions.

Female participants believed that all men held this view. Younger women (aged 15-24 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 younger women), for instance, said that if they earned a higher income than their husbands, the men would feel that this usurped their natural authority in the household:

R1[1]: When he sees she has a lot of money, it seems the woman is the man in the house. That money was meant to be for the man and now it is hers. He will say, 'how come somebody called a woman should have all this money…it is impossible!'

R2: He automatically thinks that the woman has ruled over me in the family

R3: (He thinks) I can't tell her anything and I can't even get rid of her because she has money

R4: He is the one, he is supposed to decide…

Older women also agreed that men naturally assumed to be household heads. A 44-year-old woman, who at the time of marriage earned more money than her partner, reinforced this sentiment in an interview when she said:

He (my husband) wanted a woman whom he would find at home. It created a slight problem for us. That attitude of the man is that the woman should just stay home.

First, he was harsh (saying) that, 'I am a man, so I am the one who makes decisions'.

Not only did participants use nature to justify the role of men as breadwinners, they also pointed to the fact that family creation was based on the premises of a rigid distribution of labour. Take for example, what a 25-year-old man said in a personal interview, when he suggested that it was a man's responsibility to provide for a woman once they were married:

Perhaps there is a man who doesn't bring money (home), he tells his wife to go and work and bring money. That is exploitation because (when) you marry your wife and you tell her that let us go live together, it means that when you tell her that, you have already planned to take care of her.

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[1] Quotations with multiple respondents represent excerpts from focus group discussions; respondents are distinguished by numbers

The notion that a legitimate marriage was one where the man provided economically was unanimous amongst the study participants. For example, the younger men (aged 15-24 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 younger men) discussed that it was a man's marital duty to be breadwinner:

> R1: When you are unable to take care of your family and you accept that the woman must work in order to help the family…
>
> R2: Now that is not a marriage
>
> R1: You are unable to provide for the family. Have you married a woman to be taken care of by her?
>
> R3: Regarding the issue of wife and husband, there are responsibilities. When you neglect them there is no marriage
>
> R4: Basically, as the father, you should know your responsibilities. You should take care of your family and your wife

Marriage entailed implicit and shared knowledge about the appropriate behaviours of a husband. That is, not only did the men attach personal value to their role as household providers, they were socially obliged by the marital contract to fulfil this expectation. Participants' narrative pointed to the existence of a rigid gender norm of male provision in Kirumba: men and women unanimously described how the appropriate behaviour for men in the society was to fulfil their obligation as breadwinners and that it was unacceptable when they failed in this role.

"Nowadays they (the men) don't leave enough money (for the expenses)"

Whereas study participants unanimously acknowledged a norm of male breadwinning, they also collectively agreed that men were failing to meet normative expectations. Men's inability to generate income increased pressure on women to find jobs. In an individual interview, a 42-year-old woman, for instance, remarked: "When you look at our men of nowadays, they don't leave

enough money, or they don't leave money at all." And younger women (aged 15-24-years) in focus group 1 (FG1 younger women) also suggested: "Right now in marriages the women are the ones who provide…There are many men who come home, they stand there with their hands in their pockets and ask if the food is ready, and they have not even left 100 Shillings." Male participants also remarked on women assuming breadwinning roles. Older men in the focus group, for instance, shared this impression when they said: "The problem is the low income…Due to this situation, the woman devises a strategy to get money for the expenses." Men's failure to provide is described as a "problem" because it contradicts the gender norm of male breadwinning. The reference to "nowadays", or "right now" communicates that participants perceived current practice as a shift in the gendered behaviour of Kirumba residents, occasioned by "changing times".

In the data, we found great consensus among participants that men were no longer able to provide single-handedly for the family. This change had placed many women in formerly male-dominated public roles, as women entered the labour market. Participants' narrative of women's work was repeatedly linked to men's inability to generate enough income, as remarked by these women, aged 20 and 24, respectively, in separate individual interviews: "What caused me to work is that you find the man doesn't provide all the needs"; "You can't just sit at home and wait for the man to bring you everything. Right now, the current situation is not like it was a long time ago". Both individual and group accounts revealed that most women in Kirumba were self-employed and were working in the informal sector, including in petty trading and commerce, and selling food such as fish, fruit, and vegetables.

Both women and men shared the opinion that women's paid work was an economic necessity; men, however, said that, given the choice, they would prefer it if their partners stayed

at home. Male participants believed that women's entry into the labour market was inappropriate as it would keep women from taking care of the family and the household. A 45-year-old man, for instance, said in a personal interview: "Actually if it were up to me, she (my wife) would have been a housewife so that she would always be available to help the children." And according to another 35-year old-man, also in a personal interview: "A woman is to be married, it is to take care of the children. The woman comes to give birth…". Further, in another personal account, a 23-year-old man explained how expectations of wifely servitude remained unperturbed by women's participation in the workforce:

> If a wife works, it is required that she puts her family responsibilities first, then she should work…otherwise a man feels there are some things that I am missing or there are some things that a woman should do that she fails to do because of the work she had…

Despite women crossing traditional gender norms through income generation and working alongside their partners, the home and "family responsibilities" remained ideologically and materially the expected priority of women's everyday lives in Kirumba.

Although the gender norms regulating men's exclusive access to paid labour were forced to change as couples saw no other alternative in the face of financial hardship, these changes conflicted with what was expected of men, and women, within intimate partnerships. Norms assigning the role of breadwinner to men were still strong amongst couples and in the community at large, to the point that men who earned less than their wives were ridiculed by the community.

"If a man's wife is the breadwinner the neighbours will think he is a fool"

Despite the widespread recognition of the financial hardships facing families in Kirumba, men faced strong negative sanctions for failing in their role of provision. Participants discussed how men were mocked by their peers if their partners out-earned them. A 19-year-old woman, for instance, said in an interview: "What worries the husband, is that, for instance, you (the woman) are the one who provides for the services at home…for a man that does not understand, he is told by his fellow men that he is so stupid: 'you are so stupid, and your wife is feeding you."

Participants of both sexes reflected extensively on the fact that if a man departs from the gender norm of breadwinning, his peers would belittle him. Discussing that very issue, older women (aged 35-50 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 older women) were explicit when they remarked on the following: "[If a man's wife is the breadwinner] there are those who might look down on him", and: " The neighbours will think he is a fool, he is being taken care of by a woman", and again with increased evidence of social ostracization: " You can't talk among your fellow men."

Not only were men seen as emasculated by their wives' roles as breadwinners, but they were also disrespected by individuals suggesting that their wives were having affairs. Female participants extensively discussed how men believed that, if left unrestricted, women would see other men. A 23-year-old woman, for instance, said in an interview: "Men think a woman faces temptations at work; she deals mostly with men, so people think she cannot just be seated with them, she must be having an affair." And according to the personal opinion of a 19-year-old woman: "If somebody's wife is doing business far from home, her husband thinks she might end up doing prostitution." And yet again a 25-year-old woman explained in an interview that in the

opinion of a man: "If a woman works she will find another man because she has affairs when she goes to work."

Male participants also reflected on the risk to a man's reputation represented by a woman working outside the household. Older men (aged 35-50 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 older men) contemplated how they believed that working women would be gossiped about for inappropriate sexual behaviour. One man, for instance, said: "You might have allowed your wife to work and… [people say] at times the wife is [sleeping] with somebody." And to that comment, another man responded: "The whole society that surrounds you thinks you are not a real man." Participants suggested that working women engaged in extramarital affairs. Women's lack of faithfulness was a major concern for men: a rumour about a woman's infidelity (little mattered whether it was true or false until proven false) would damage her partner's reputation. One man, for instance, referred to a loss of dignity when describing the consequences of women's access to paid work: "I know most men think that if his wife roams around with another man, he will be looked down upon a lot, his dignity will have been lowered." And another man explained that should others suggest he has been cheated on, a man would ask himself: "How can I show my face? There are some men that leave that area and some men move from that province [because of that]." The fact that a man may have felt the need to move from the area is testament to the extent to which a wife's infidelity was seen to damage a man's reputation. Such shame manifested in the anticipation of being ostracised and laughed at, and it strongly suggests the presence of a social norm. Similarly, the man quoted earlier, who believed that a man's dignity would be damaged if his wife has an extramarital affair, provided evidence of a norm against women's social and economic mobility. This norm was in turn restricting women's access to paid labour. When restrictions were made impossible by existing household economic

conditions, the necessity to transgress the norm increased family tension. This tension resulted in women's experience of IPV, as we see in detail in the next section.

"The problem is the husband's low income…that is what causes conflict in the house"

The violence that the women in Kirumba experienced embodied both the men's angry response to the ridicule they faced for failing in the role of the breadwinner and the hope that it would restore their standing in front of their peers. The following discussion amongst the younger women (aged 15-24 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 younger women) revealed the links between women's greater economic mobility and physical violence:

> R1: Day after day you cook chicken, you are frying it every day. But there is a day when he will come (home), once you want to serve him you will be surprised to be slapped
>
> R2: (He thinks), how did she get this chicken?
>
> R3: It is because he doesn't have a job. Now you may not be able to understand – this one has beaten me in a way that is so fast.

His violence, this woman continued, came from a place of suffering: "No man accepts to be fed", "He feels sad", "He suffers in his heart." Men's suffering was a result of the reversal of normal male and female roles. In the discussion above, women's breadwinning was symbolised by a woman bringing home "chicken" for dinner, which communicated that she could afford an expensive food item. A woman was beaten because the man "doesn't have a job" and could not "accept to be fed" the chicken. The violence was experienced as an expression of male frustration for the reversal of roles.

Furthermore, the reversal of roles as a result of male impoverishment (i.e. women as providers), was linked to women engaging in extra marital affairs for material gain. The poverty-

led narrative of sex-for-money was reflected amongst older men (aged 35-50 years) in focus group 1 (FG1 older men):

R1: The problem is the husband's low income. Most of us in this society have this issue

R:2 The woman provides everything

R3: She sees that Mr. Bena has a higher income so she might seduce him because of her difficult economic situation, due to the desire for money

R1: And that is what causes conflict in the house

R4: So her husband is worried about this business, and due to a lack of trust he wonders if it is her business that enables her to earn or whether she gets her money from an illegitimate way

R5: Places of work are temptation: she will meet men with higher incomes than his and she might do other things

According to the men, if women worked, they would take advantage of their physical mobility to exchange sex-for-money in order to compensate for their husband's failure to provide.

The sex-for-money narrative was employed across the data to explain men's resistance to women working outside the home. This issue presented a huge challenge for men, because – as revealed earlier – a woman's infidelity caused grave damage to a man's reputation. Men's resistance to women working outside the home was thus fuelled by concerns over male dignity, which was bound up with female decency. Further, according to this group of men (FG1 older men), a man must take appropriate measures to punish his wife's sexual immodesty:

R1: Think about Damian's image. He is not a guy that can let his wife (exchange fish-for-sex)

R2: When he sees such a situation, the kind of measures that he might decide to take

is more severe than the measure of slapping you…

As seen in the above account, violence was perceived as an appropriate measure to preserve Damian's social image. Men were pressured to maintain their reputation, and sometimes they did so through violence. A 25-year-old man said in an individual interview that if a woman embarrassed her husband via an act of infidelity, he would use physical violence to reprimand her:

Most of the time you find somebody becomes harsh, he is envious. He becomes

harsh and hits his wife because he finds her standing with somebody. He must

complain and become furious, and there must be fighting. So with the issue of envy,

it is not that somebody loves somebody so much. No. It is due to the fear of being

shamed-that an individual should not feel disgraced in front of other people.

The notion that a man must restore his reputation after a perceived female infidelity was also evident in the following personal account:

I mean many of them (the neighbours) thought I will find out that she is having an

affair and many of them thought that I would decide to beat her, to chase her away.

(If you don't do that), most of the people will take you as being controlled by a

woman, you see (35-year-old man).

Men thus faced social pressure to punish their wives for potential infidelity, by "chasing" them away; i.e., divorcing them and/or "beating" them. Violence was therefore a means to restore the man's integrity.

Discussion

Our findings suggest that oppressive gender norms in Kirumba interacted with couples' shifting economic dynamics to exacerbate men's use of violence. Participants discussed how the norm of male breadwinning was being threatened as women were forced to leave the house in search of paid work. Participants explained further that when men did not comply with this norm, they faced harsh social punishments. In particular, men were ridiculed by their peers when their wives out earned them, and, when women left the house to work, they were exposed to stigmatising gossip about their sexual faithfulness, which in turn caused grave damage to a man's reputation. Men responded to the social pressure by employing violence to both reassert their status as household head and to salvage their reputation when it was questioned. Four critical considerations stand out from our study.

These changes in partnership dynamics in Kirumba can be interpreted within the context of a worsening local economy linked to the structural adjustment policies of the 1980s and 90s. Several studies have documented how socioeconomic changes in urban and rural East Africa, linked to these policies, have increasingly disempowered men and affected male and female gender identity and the relations between the sexes (Silberschmidt, 2001, 2004; Vyas et al., 2015). The dynamics revealed in our study are similar to events that unfolded in Bangladesh several decades ago. Chronic poverty interfered with men's ability to fulfil their end of the "patriarchal bargain" (Kandiyoti, 1988), which included providing economic support to their wives and families, thereby undermining the material base of classical patriarchy (Schuler, Lenzi, Nazneen, & Bates, 2013). Furthermore, and also parallel to our findings, it was only when the family became desperate enough that substantial numbers of women in Bangladesh sought paid employment outside the home, and when they did, they faced severe gender discrimination

in the labour market. However, data from several recent studies in Bangladesh (Kabeer, Mahmud, & Tasneem, 2011; Schuler et al., 2013; Schuler & Nazneen, 2018) indicate that positive changes in the larger socio-economic environment in the country have combined with a relaxation of gender norms regarding women's economic mobility such that that women's entry into paid labour is now largely experienced as empowering. Women are beginning to find empowering alternatives to the patriarchal bargain that existed and the terms of the arrangement are being renegotiated such that men are beginning to lose their "right" to use IPV against their wives (Schuler et al., 2013).

Our findings also expand on the literature that suggests that the relation between women's paid work, gender norms, and women's experience of violence is contingent on a host of factors, including the change in social status that comes with paid labour (Vyas et al., 2015), the specific circumstances in which the woman is working but her partner is not (Burton, Duvvury, & Varia, 2000), the kind of paid work that women do (Kabeer et al., 2011) and the larger contextual economic inequalities (R. Jewkes, 2002). The only other study, that we could find on the impact of the economic crisis in Tanzania (Dar es Salaam) on partner violence, reported findings that diverged from ours: the economic necessities forcing women to enter into paid labour as traders did not appear to increase their vulnerability to partner violence (Vyas et al., 2015). The researchers focused on women's absolute income as a risk factor for IPV. Our study suggests the link between partner violence and situations in which men have a lower status or fewer resources in relation to their female partners within the context of declining economic opportunities for men (Amin, Khan, Rahman, & Naved, 2013; Bates, Schuler, Islam, & Islam, 2004; Gelles, 1972; Hadi, 2000; O'Brien, 1971; Rodman, 1972). Other scholars have also suggested that economic inequality within a context of poverty is more important than the

absolute level of income or empowerment of a man or woman in a relationship (R. Jewkes, 2002). In addition, findings from several studies (Amin et al., 2013; Anderson, 1997; Bates et al., 2004; Hadi, 2000; Naved & Persson, 2005) indicate that when women contribute more than a nominal amount of income to household expenses, this appears to put them at a greater risk of violence. Our study identifies the particular characteristics associated with women's contribution to the household income that provoked a male backlash in Kirumba: if a woman's contribution was larger than what the man could offer, it presented a challenge to the man, who responded with violence.

The third contribution of our study relates to the social interdependence of female labour. In Kirumba, social pressure on men was restricting normative change linked to women's paid work. Despite the widespread recognition of the challenging economic conditions faced by local families and the requirement for women to enter paid work, men faced strong social punishments for failing in their role of provider. Negative social sanctions played a crucial role in keeping inequitable gender norms in place in the study setting. Indeed, whether a particular behaviour is constructed as being socially acceptable or deviant is likely to depend on observations about whether the actors are subsequently sanctioned for the behaviour (Bandura, 1973). A study in Bangladesh exploring the link between women's paid work and IPV suggests that as community-level perceptions evolve to the point that women's economic and social empowerment is no longer viewed as transgressive, this change is negatively associated with IPV (Schuler & Nazneen, 2018). Our study goes further in examining how the change in women's gender roles in Kirumba interacted with hegemonic masculine ideals that made it more difficult for men to achieve norms of ideal masculinity, undermining men's gender identity and their sense of control and dominance, and exacerbating the risk of IPV perpetration (Schuler, Lenzi, Badal, &

Nazneen, 2018). Indeed, researchers studying men's perspectives on women's empowerment and IPV (Schuler et al., 2018) caution that IPV cannot be understood in any meaningful or useful way without understanding how masculinities are constructed and how they function. Men in Kirumba were reprimanded for transgressing the gender norm deemed natural for their sex: the gender norm of male breadwinning encapsulates men's gender identity, which does not change easily, especially because the change involves a loss of masculine status (Butler, 2006). Men therefore had little space to adjust to the economic changes linked to women's employment that ultimately benefited their families (Schuler et al., 2013).

Finally, the fourth critical finding of our study is that actions and gender norm change are not always concurrent. As evidenced in our study, despite women crossing traditional gender roles and contributing to the family income, their new actions did not appear to weaken the widely-held gendered perception that men should be in charge of provision. On the contrary, women's new roles were associated with increasing gender antagonism and violence. The norm of male breadwinning possesses a remarkable ability to persist in the face of socio-economic change in Kirumba because people continue to hold deeply-held beliefs that men and women are essentially different (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). As our findings revealed, economic provision, which is bound to male gender identity, (Marcus & Harper, 2014), is seen as "naturally" male and thus incompatible with female income earning. The perception of male breadwinning and female dependence as 'natural' constructions compels one's belief in the necessity and naturalisation of gender norms (Butler, 2006). Gender change is only truly transformative when women's economic participation is accompanied by opportunities for both women and men to transcend the internalised oppression that restricts their perceived options (Schuler & Nazneen, 2018). Gender norm change is thus a process that involves awareness and sense of self as well as

power, and it must work through multiple levels, including the individual level, in interpersonal relations and through collective action (Schuler & Nazneen, 2018).

Study limitations

A key limitation to the study methodology is regarding the role of the researchers as 'outsiders'. Some scholars argue that this position isolates the researchers from the phenomenon being studied, thereby limiting the richness and detail and enhancing potential misunderstandings and inaccuracy (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). The purpose of our study, however, was to enhance the understanding of IPV in its natural setting, with emphasis on the meanings, experiences, and views of participants (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). Although all the authors did not have a thick ethnographic knowledge of local customs, beliefs, and ways of thinking, the differences that existed between participants and the researchers became an opportunity for participants to explore their commonalities, or the 'Africa' context, juxtaposed with the place where the researchers were from. The respondents theorised their viewpoints and articulated information that they assumed was the taken-for-granted knowledge of an 'insider' (Rhodes, 1994). The researchers' position thus inadvertently became an asset with regard to eliciting fuller explanations of the 'Tanzanian culture' (Merriam et al., 2001). In addition, the primary researcher is native to East Africa and was therefore not completely 'removed' from the understanding of how local people made sense of the world. Whereas the author also speaks Swahili, we worked closely with the study interviewers and a bilingual language teacher in Mwanza to fully understand the euphemisms and local vernacular so that the original meaning intended by the participants was not lost in translation.

Whereas our position thus enabled us to maintain a critical distance from the phenomenon being investigated, research is seldom value free, and the researchers' background,

training and assumptions will inevitably shape the research process (Coyle & Williams, 2000).

To ensure methodological trustworthiness, and in pursuit of enhancing the integrity and rigour of

the findings, we have made explicit the decisions we took as a means of critical reflection, The

concept of 'reflexivity' is one of the fundamental principles of qualitative research, and is

characterised by continual self-critique and attending systematically to the content of knowledge

construction during the research process (Coyle & Williams, 2000; Reynolds et al., 2011). That

the authors found common patterns when separately coding the same transcripts further provides

a measure of the credibility of our findings.

Implications for practice

The gender norms construct was useful in framing how changing economic conditions interact

with changing roles and gender norms to influence the risk of partner violence in Tanzania.

Feminist theories on gender inequality maintain that gender norms are key to maintaining partner

violence: norms are key determinants of IPV, operating across spatial contexts that are intimately

connected to the organisation of household relations (Bowlby, Gregory, & McKie, 1997).

Indeed, gender norms in Kirumba express and maintain systems of ideation, institution and

social relations associated with men's control over women, including women's social and

economic mobility (Schuler et al., 2018). Men perceive women as challenging their traditional

role as the household breadwinner, and paid work is increasing women's vulnerability to

violence. As such, gender norms lag behind behaviour change.

   The finding that behaviour change precedes norm change presents an opportunity for

violence prevention programmes to facilitate normative change around headship and authority

because men can no longer live up to their end of the "patriarchal bargain" (Kandiyoti, 1988).

Policy makers and programmers trying to promote nonviolent forms of masculinity should

examine carefully what influences men's self-interest (Schuler et al., 2013). Men themselves must feel that they will also benefit from such involvement that does not mean losing their masculinity (Silberschmidt, 2001, 2004). They may feel less threatened by language and imagery that does not undermine the normative constructions of manhood. Programmes can ease men and women into new gender roles, for example, by promoting the notion of shared economic burden, so that women's entry in the workforce is not perceived as a sign of men's failure but rather as a need to adapt to the changing material realities of families (Stern, Heise, & McLean, 2017). Effective interventions and policies should thus integrate awareness of the existing gender norms to ensure that change happens as a conciliatory process involving both men and women for effective sustainable positive improvement of partnership dynamics.

Appendix

Table 1.
Participant Characteristics [2]

Participant Characteristics		Data Collection Method	
Gender	**Age**	**Focus Group**	**Semi-structured Interviews**
Women	15 -24 years	2	5
	35-50 years	2	5
Men	15 -24 years	2	5
	35-50 years	2	5
Total		**8 Focus Groups**	**20 Semi-structured Interviews**

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[2] A few exceptions were made regarding the age requirement of participants admitted into the study, in cases where they were a year or two over the age limit. The assumption was that admitting these individuals into the study would not compromise the data quality.

Table 2.

Example of Vignette and three selected follow-up questions

Pendo lives with her husband Damian and her two children; a five-year-old boy and a nine-year-old daughter. She has completed standard 7 and works in the market selling fruit and vegetables, as Damian does not give her enough housekeeping money. Today, things are slow at the market, and Pendo stays later than usual to try and sell her fruit and vegetables. While waiting to catch a piki piki (motorcycle taxi) to get back home, Pendo is seen talking and laughing with another man behind the market. When she gets back to the house, Damian is already back. Pendo has not prepared dinner and the household chores have not been completed.

1. What do you think will happen when Pendo gets home?
   - Probe: How might Damian react? Why?
   - Probe: If Damian had been out drinking with his friends do you think he might react differently? In what way?

2. How does Damian feel about Pendo trying to earn an income?
   - Probe: Is he glad that she is bringing money into the household, or does he feel threatened by it?
   - Probe: Is he likely to be more or less forgiving that dinner is not ready because Pendo is out trying to earn money?

3. What do people in the community think about Pendo working?
   - Probe: Would most of Pendo's neighbours tend to respect her more or less because she is out working in the market? Does anyone support her?

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