Assessment Of Gender Inequality And Crime Reporting In Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract
Crime reporting level in Kenya has a lot of variances across gender. While there are other factors that are at play in crime reporting, for instance lack of faith in the police, corruption among police officers and a long, tedious justice procedure in Kenya, it has been established that gender disparities that are so much entrenched in the African societies. The general objective of the study was to analyze the relationship between gender inequality and crime reporting practices in, Eldoret, UasinGishu County, Kenya. The specific objectives were: to evaluate how gender based cultural practices and social factors influence crime reporting and evaluate ways of mitigating gender disparities in crime reporting. Planned behavior and gender victimization theories were used to guide this study. A descriptive survey research design was used with purposive sampling method to arrive at the sample size. Questionnaires were distributed to 127 respondents. The Quantitative Data was analyzed using descriptive and content analysis. From the responses it became apparent that the respondents had been subjected to various forms of gender inequalities including gender based violence, denial of property rights, denial of education and cultural discriminations. Further, the findings showed that 78% of the respondents stated that they had never reported the gender based crime committed while 22% stated that they had reported. This reveals a very low percentage of crime reporting in Eldoret hence the based on the study findings, the study recommends that community based interventions which include incorporating the village managers and other local community leaders in raising awareness on crime reporting should be actively employed to eliminate gender disparities in crime reporting. Secondly the study recommends reforming of the criminal justice system to encourage both genders to report gender related inequalities. The study also recommends that socio-economic empowerment programs should be enhanced to reduce gender disparities.
Keywords: *Gender inequality, Social Practices, Cultural practices, Crime reporting*

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I.   Background Of The Study

Crime reporting is the process of formally communicating incidences of crime to the law enforcement agencies particularly the police with an aim of arresting and bringing the offender to account through a court process or any other legalized process (Harlow, 1985). According to the National Crime Victimization survey (2015) crime reporting is contingent on among other factors like the societal perception that it is a private matter or societal norms. According to Cambridge shire Research Group (2014) only 42 percent of the victims report the crime to the official authorities with 89 percent of those who do not report citing the fear of reprisal as the main reason. It is argued that crime reporting is often affected by several variables, among them is gender related issues (Avdija &Giever, 2012). Gender plays a major role in deciding whether the witnessed crimes or victimization will be reported to the security authorities or not. The nexus between gender inequalities and crime reporting is therefore an area that is increasingly gaining attention in most countries of the world. A research by Mugo (2018) highlighted major challenges and gender disparities in reporting and handling of crimes. In the study, a discovery was made that the most likely gender to report crimes were women compared to men and this is due to the societal norm and perception that men are not supposed to display vulnerability. Survey conducted within the study showed that 88% Women and 83% Men did not agree that fighting among partners could be excused if the fight was due to anger or loss of control. Further, 47% Men and 62% Women were in an agreement that persons who report sexual assault cases are nearly telling the truth always, hence showing a gender cap in reporting.

Recent research by Hullenaar and Ruback (2020) found that gender norm perspectives accredit gender

differences in crime reporting to existing gender norms that tend to influence crime reporting decisions. The study found that in crime reporting female victims had 22 percent likelihood of reporting crimes if the offender was male while 46 percent of the male victims were more likely to report the crime if the offender was female. The study established that gender norms played a role in influencing the tendency of a victim to report opposite gender offender and that the reporting behaviors of both female and male were congruent with the norms that encouraged the use of self-help violence and hence discouraged police reporting in intra-gender crimes. In another study, Hasan (2016) observed that crime reporting is often hampered by stigma and fear of retribution especially when the victims are women and girls. For instance, some cultures prevent victims from reporting crimes under the pretext that it is a social taboo. Gender inequalities are manifested in various aspects including education, early marriages, cultural practices and gender based violence.

Globally, it has been estimated that 33 percent of women have experienced forms of gender-based violence including; physical violence, assaults etc. However, reporting of crimes related to gender inequalities is low and varied among the male and female genders (Avdija&Giever, 2012). Gender based social practices also contributes to gender inequalities in various communities. A research by Perrin, Marsh and Clough (2019) examined the social norms and beliefs that encourage gender inequality issues like gender-based violence in societies. The study established that societies sometimes have unspoken rules that have been normalized and which bring about gender inequalities. These issues include social norms regarding sexual purity and authority of men over women. Community leaders can sometimes reinforce such norms for instance in the case of blaming women for sexual assault they experience or justifying a man's use of physical violence on women as a means of disciplining the wife. Such normalized societal practices may influence the decision to report a crime to the police particularly gender based violence (Odhiambo, 2018). The socio-economic inequalities between men and women are another aspect of gender based inequality. Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (1994-2016) explained that economic disparities, poverty in families as well as lack of education had increased the probability of females reporting crimes especially revolving around victimization to the police.

Statement of the Problem

Crime reporting is a fundamental aspect of the criminal justice system, playing a crucial role in various areas, from law enforcement to community safety and policy-making. The importance of accurate and timely crime reporting is multifaceted, impacting investigations, resource allocation, community relations, and the overall effectiveness of the justice system. Yet studies reveal that there are gender differences in crime reporting. Decker, et al., (2019) observes that gender inequities tend to influence crime reporting patterns to the police officers. Most African cultures perceive men and women as not equals hence the decision to report or not to report is largely influence by the cultural and societal norms. Most African countries in Kenya have cultural and societal norms that influence decisions by men and women to report crimes to the police. The societal norms, cultural issues and economic disparities may help in explaining the disparities in reporting across genders (Odhiambo, 2018).

In Kenya, it is estimated that close to half of the Kenyan population are concerned about crimes with almost 75 percent claiming to be feeling not safe (United Nations Survey, 2002). The study found out that male victims reported crime more than female due to the sociological, psychological and economic perspectives. According to IPSOS Synovate report (2016), only 45 percent of the crimes are reported in urban areas out of the total number of criminal incidents. From the incidents reported, the reporting by male was more than female reporting. Eldoret has witnessed an unprecedented increase in gender-based discrimination (NPS, 2018).

A survey by Ndong and Oooko (2016) revealed an upsurge in gender-based discrimination in Eldoret where 53 percent of the respondents stated that they were frequently abused in form of physical violence. In Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County, gender-based crimes like gender violence are often less reported according to the NPS (2018). With the societal norms that exists that puts men in higher position than women, there has been less reporting of gender-based crimes as such crimes looks normalized. Most victims therefore do not report such form of crimes hence they continue to suffer in silence for fear of further victimization. It is against this backdrop that the current study narrowed down to the gender inequalities and how they affect crime reporting. This is because lack of reporting has seen an increase in gender related crimes according to Kaburu & Kwadzo (2022).

Objectives of the study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the Gender inequality issues affecting crime reporting practices in Eldoret, UasinGishu County, Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were;
i) To examine how gender based cultural practices affect crime reporting practices in Eldoret, UasinGishu county
ii) To determine how gender based social practices impact crime reporting in Eldoret, UasinGishu County.
iii) To examine ways of mitigating the gender disparities in crime reporting in Eldoret, UasinGishu County.

Research Questions
i)   How does gender based cultural practices affect crime reporting practices in Eldoret, UasinGishu?
ii) How does gender based Social Practices impact crime reporting in Eldoret, UasinGishu?
iii) What are the ways of mitigating the gender disparities in crime reporting in Eldoret, UasinGishu County?

II.   Literature Review

Theoretical Review
This study was based on two theories namely, gender victimization theory and theory of planned behavior.

Gender victimization theory
The gender victimization theory was developed by John Money (1955). According to Baligar (2018), gender in broad sense deals with social, psychological and cultural differences between males and females. According to the theory, the behavioral gender differences are shaped by the societal and cultural values and beliefs. For instance, Macionis (2010) explains that gender as interpreted in most societies tend to view a man to be the one in the control center of the society and therefore shapes the behavior of men in the society. According to Steffensmeier (1996), gender gap exists everywhere hence it's a universal phenomenon and in the area of crimes there is always likely to be a gender gap between male and female offenders. In the area of crime reporting, using the gender-based theory; it can be argued that the reporting behaviors of men and women tend to differ as shaped by the societal behavioral patterns and cultural beliefs. This theory informed the current study in comprehending and explaining gender differences in crime reporting in Kenya.

Theory of planned Behavior
Ajzen (1991) developed the theory of planned behavior. The theory of planned behavior has been used in diverse fields to explain how norms, attitudes and perceived behavioral control can be used to predict an intention for an individual to act. Keller (2009) used the theory of planned behaviors to explain the crime reporting behaviors among individuals. Various past studies have also employed the theory to understand crime reporting trends. For instance, Greenberg and Rubak (1992) explained that the decision to report or not report a crime is largely driven by the cost benefit analysis where a victim weighs the costs and benefits of reporting the crime to the police. If the benefits outweigh the cost, an individual may be motivated to report a crime. Keller (2009) points out that the decision to report a crime to the police is driven by among other things the nature of crime committed, the attitude of the victim towards the offender and the attitude and perceptions towards the police. If the attitude towards the police is negative, there is a higher likelihood that the crime will not be reported. This theory was hence employed in the current study in understanding the crime reporting which is the study's dependent variable by understanding how norms, attitudes, beliefs and even societal factors shape the reporting patterns.

Empirical Review
This section explores the preceding studies done on crime reporting.

Gender based cultural practices and crime reporting
Various studies have been conducted with an aim of uncovering the logic behind the unreported crimes. Aberinto (2015) surveyed on the character of crime and crime reporting in Lagos Nigeria. The independent variables were the social crimes and the economic crime with the dependent variable being crime reporting. A questionnaire was the main data collection instrument that was relied upon. Using a multiple regression analysis, the findings revealed that 52.2 percent of the crimes were unreported with only 47.8 percent being reported. Cultural considerations were identified as the major reason for the high percentage of unreported crime cases. The shortcoming of the study however comes from the fact that while it identifies the character of crime and reporting it does not outline how gender inequality issues can influence crime reporting behavior. The current study was thus aimed at filling the research gap by explicitly identifying the gender inequality and establishing their relationship with crime reporting in Eldoret, UasinGishu County.

Boateng (2016) examined on the crime reporting behavior. Specifically, the study examined how the attitude towards the police influences the reporting behavior. The study was done in Ghana with the data being collected from 500 victims of various crimes in the area of Accra. One of the main objectives was to examine of gender had a significant effect on the decision of the victims to report criminal incidents to the police. It was established that women were less likely to report cases especially the assault cases because of the cultural perspectives. The findings reinforced earlier findings by Boateng and Lee (2014) which disclosed that culture is a key consideration as victims especially women report the crimes meted on them. Most cases by women are usually reported to the immediate family members as the first point of contact. In terms of the gender, it was established that gender significantly influenced the decision of the victims to report crimes. The current study

focused on how gender based victimization prevents women from reporting and the implications that this has had.

Gender Based Social Practices in crime reporting

A review by Rypi, Burcar and Akerstrom (2019) done in Sweden on crime reporting among young men points to the hegemonic masculinity norms as the main reason why men do not report crimes to the police. According to the study, the society associates male masculinity with the ability to defend himself; a situation described by the study as "manliness" hence most young men find it difficult to report the offenders. Another review by Council of Crime Prevention (2018) indicated that there were differences in crime reporting according to gender due to fear of retaliation and stigmatization whereby women are more inclined to report sexual assault and GBV crimes due to less fear of stigmatization as compared to men, gender norms and socialization influence how individuals report crimes whereby men are less likely to report a crime because of self-reliance and masculinity expected from them by the society, social and economic factors affect reporting of crime as victims relying on the abuser for financial assistance are less likely to report the crimes for fear of economic repercussions. The study nonetheless did not address other aspects like culture which also tend to influence the crime reporting patterns.

In Nigeria, a study done by Ayodele and Aderinto (2016) found that cultural norms and social factors tend to influence crime reporting patterns in the African setting. For instance, the Yoruba culture is made of strict norms and rules that influence reporting among men and women. As noted by the study, in Nigerian communities, men were more culturally and commonly known to report crimes than females and this situation tend to be more driven by the patriarchal sentiments. In most families men who are the household heads consider it disrespectful for their wives to report crimes to the police before they can seek the approval. Ayodele and Aderinto (2016) however note that this scenario is increasingly being challenged by education which has compelled equity in access to criminal justice system devoid of gender discriminations.

Ways of mitigating gender disparities in crime reporting

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019), reforming the criminal justice system is the best way of dealing with gender inequalities that lead to gender differences in crime reporting. The criminal justice system should be able to deal with discriminatory assumptions that violate the rights of the people on the basis of gender. Sahay (2021) established that the cases of under-reporting of gender based violence are lower among women than men due to stigma and cultural practices. The study however suggests various ways in which the gender disparities in reporting a crime can be addressed. The study established that public activism and raising of awareness on gender based issues and crime reporting can help in improving crime reporting especially among women given that their rate of crime reporting is lower compared to men. Another intervention suggested in the study is the community-based interventions through programs that can be leveraged to motivate the willingness of a crime victim to report crimes. The study was however limited in that it only examined one aspect of gender inequality; that is gender-based violence in relation to crime reporting yet there are other forms of gender-based inequalities like social, economic and cultural practices which were the focus in the current study.

Similar findings were established by Wadia and Nale-Tajane (2021) which emphasized training of various stakeholders involved in handling women complaints. Through trainings, the study established that the law enforcement agencies especially the police tend to become more responsive to complaints registered by women formally in the police station. Further the willingness of the police to listen and register complaints raised by women may increase the reporting rates. An assessment by Salgado and Nolan (2019) also examined ways of encouraging reporting of crimes of violence against women. The study examined two major ways of dealing with the issue; that is; shifting of social norms and improving access to justice. The study identifies social norms like those that justify a husband beating his wife as retrogressive and hindrances to crime reporting as it normalizes a crime. The study observes that shifting away from such norms can help in shaping the behavior of those engaged in such violence by reducing the perceived costs of reporting such crimes.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is as presented in this section; the cultural practices, gender based practices, and ways of mitigating gender disparities in crime reporting represent the independent variables while the crime reporting practices is the dependent variable. The crime reporting practices identified include cases reported by men and cases reported by women and reports to the police in the area under study. The conceptual framework of the study is exhibited in figure 2.1 below;
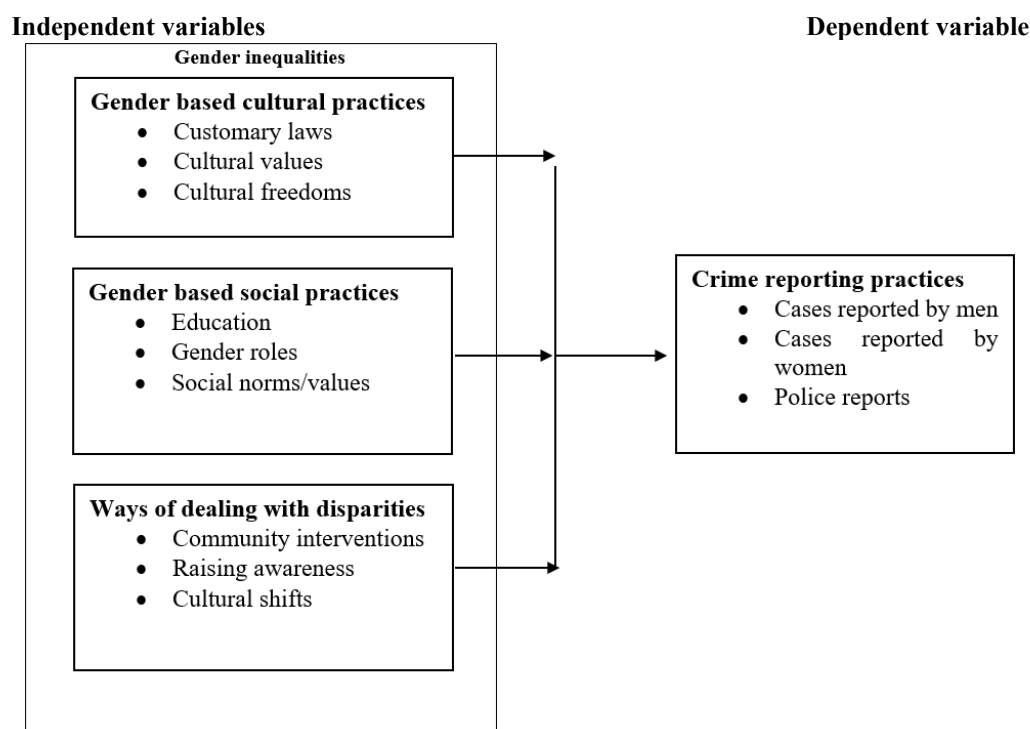
Independent variables   **Dependent variable**

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework; Source: Researcher (2023)

III.   Methodology

This section discusses the research design, target population, sample size, data collection instrument and data analysis.

Research Design

This descriptive research design was employed for this research. The design is predominantly used whenever a phenomenon is being examined and described by Kothari, 2014).

Target Population and Sample Size

The target population was victims of gender-based crimes in Eldoret town who are 18 years and above. According to Kenya National Population Census (2019), the population of Eldoret town is approximately 475,716 out of the 1.163 million population of UasinGishu County. This study only targeted men and women above 18 years of age. Hence the target population was 254 victims. The study used purposeful random sampling to determine the sample respondents. The primary goal of purposive sampling was to intentionally select participants who possess certain characteristics or experiences relevant to the research question. A threshold by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) stipulates that if a population is relatively small (less than 1000) a sample size of 30 to 50 percent is adequate. Therefore, in the current study a sample was 127 which is 50 percent of the population targeted.

Table 1. Target Population and Sample Size

Age	Target Population (Victims)	Sample Size
Men	103	52
Women	151	75
Total	**254**	**127**

Source: Researcher (2025)

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection employed structured questionnaires and the key informant interviews. The key informants helped in providing qualitative data and they comprised specifically of the victims of various gender-related issues Therefore, the targeted number of key informants was 15 mainly those who had been victims of gender related crimes.

Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics were used in data analysis and were done using SPSS version 24. Descriptive statistics presented percentages and frequencies. In addition, content analysis was utilized in examining the

qualitative information given from the key informant interviews. Upon completion of data collection, data was entered/coded using SPSS version 24. Research results presented using charts and tables.

IV. Findings And Discussion

The data findings, reveal that the rate of response was 70.8% while the non-response rate was 29.2%. Most targeted respondents who did not fill the questionnaires cited their busy schedule while others were unwilling citing personal reasons. As opined by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a response rate is deemed sufficient if it is more than 60 percent hence from the findings in the response rate of 70.8% is considered sufficient for carrying out a data analysis.

Reporting of the Gender Based Crime

The respondents were also asked if they had reported the gender-based crimes to the law enforcement authorities and the findings are as shown in figure 4.8.
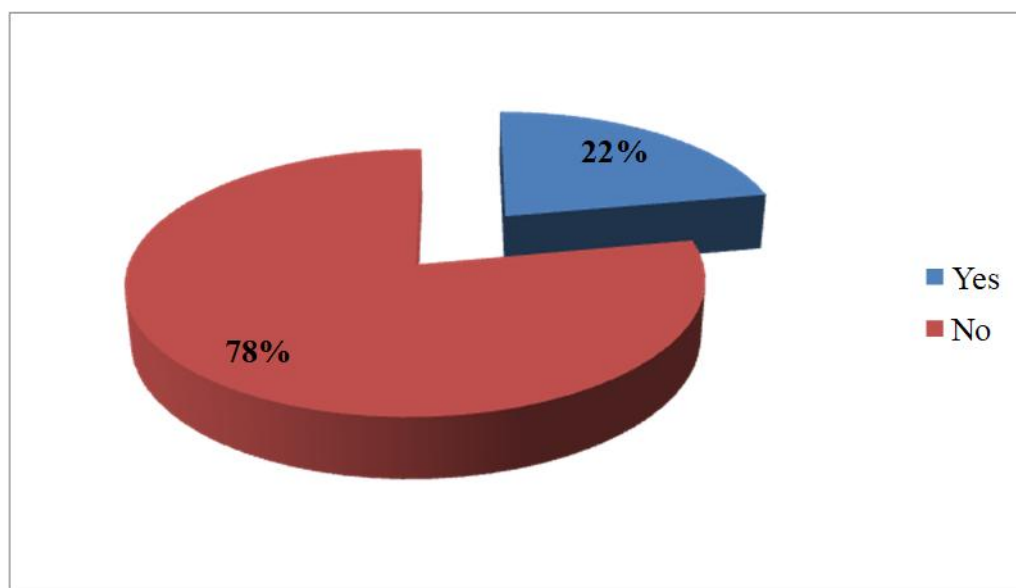

Figure 2: Reporting of Gender Related Crimes to Police

From the outcome in figure 2, seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents stated that they had never reported the gender-based crime committed while 22% stated that they had reported. This reveals a very low percentage of crime reporting in Eldoret.

Descriptive Analysis

This section presents the descriptive statistics for various gender inequality issues in relation to crime reporting.

Gender Based Cultural Practices that could Influence Crime Reporting

In this section various questions and statements were presented on gender based cultural practices in relation to crime reporting in Eldoret. Table 2 presents the research outcome.

Table 2: Gender Based Cultural Practices

Statement	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
Customary laws influence the extent to which men and women report crimes	19%	20%	4%	31%	26%
The roles of each gender in a culture determines the decision towards reporting a crime to the authorities and police	22%	29%	5%	25%	19%
Cultural values are an impediment towards crime reporting practices among men and women.	15%	20%	2%	34%	29%
There is a general fear among women to report a crime due to our culture that elevates men above them.	12%	18%	1%	37%	32%
There is no freedom of expression for women in our culture that is why they do not report crimes.	18%	22%	0%	34%	26%

Source: Research Data (2025)

Majority of the respondents also either agreed (31%) or strongly agreed (26%) that customary laws tend to influence the extent to which men and women report crimes. On the other hand,20% disagreed and 19% strongly disagreed. One of the KIs indicated;

"I did not report the crime committed against me instead the elders convinced me that the issues could be handled through our customary laws. I however feel I did not get the justice that I anticipated."

The findings are consistent with findings by Ayodele (2015) which established that most gender-based issues are resolved through cultural laws as opposed to reporting them through formal channels and this explains the low reporting of gender-based crimes. From the finding it can be concluded that the presence of customary laws though not formal plays a significant role in the low reporting of gender inequalities through formal law enforcement agencies.

However, 51% of the respondents either disagreed (29%) or strongly disagreed (22%) that the roles of each gender in a culture determines the decision towards reporting a crime to the authorities and police. On the other hand, 25% agreed and 19% strongly agreed. A KI number 8 however disagreed and thus indicated;

"Most of us especially women in our culture are confined to doing domestic chores and respecting the orders from our husbands irrespective of whether we agree or not. On this basis I find that reporting gender related crimes may put me in more trouble."

The outcome is however not in line with most reviewed studies. For instance, Boateng and Lee (2014) which disclosed that culture is a key consideration as it defines the position of men and women in the society and this influences reporting practices. Grabe, Trager, Lear and Rauch (2009) while examining the role of gender in crime reporting found that there are gender differences in crime reporting due to cultural considerations. For instance, some societies do not allow women to make decisions on crime reporting.

Moreover, majority of the respondents either agreed (34%) or strongly agreed (29%) that cultural values are an impediment towards crime reporting practices among men and women. On the contrary, 35% disagreed. A KI number 2 stated;

"Most of us especially men have been made to believe that our roles should be confined to protecting our families as the heads and this includes addressing all issues at the family level. For this reason, I have found it difficult reporting the gender related crimes committed against me to the law enforcement officers as the culture puts me in a position where I should solve all the problems internally."

The findings are congruent with the findings by Boateng (2016) which found that cultural perspectives influence decision making on whether or not to report a gender-based crime. According to gender victimization theory, the behavioral gender differences are shaped by the societal and cultural values and beliefs.

Furthermore, most of the respondents agreed (37%) and strongly agreed (32%) that there is a general fear among women to report crime due to culture that elevates men above women. On the contrary, 22% disagreed and 18% strongly disagreed. KI number 5 indicated;

"It is true that our culture puts men in higher position than women and with it comes the expectation that women must respect their men under any circumstance, this makes us fear reporting gender related crimes."

The findings were collaborated by the previous findings which established that in most gender inequalities women have fear of reporting crimes due to cultural stereotypes. For instance, a study by Ayodele (2015) which sought to demystify on the crime reporting practices among market women in Oyo, Nigeria found that cultural considerations are a major hindrance towards the decision by women to report crimes against them.

Majority of the respondents also either agreed (34%) or strongly agreed (26%) that there is no freedom of expression for women in their culture and this is why they do not report crimes. On the other hand, 22% disagreed and 18% strongly disagreed. A KI number 1 stated;

"In most instances our culture takes the opinion of men more seriously than that from women. Women do not have absolute freedom to express themselves worst of all in such sensitive matters like crimes committed against them, I therefore find it difficult reporting to the police."

The findings are in line with previous findings for example Aberinto (2015) found that women in different cultures tend not to have freedoms and this inhibits their ability to report crimes. From this finding it can be inferred that the culture in the study location tend to undermine the freedoms of women and for this reason most women are discouraged from reporting crimes.

Gender Based Social Practices that Could Influence Crime Reporting

In this subsection various questions and statements were presented on gender based social practices in relation to crime reporting in Eldoret. Table 3 presents the research outcome.

Table 3: Gender Based Social Practices and Crime Reporting

Statement	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
There is a gap in the education level among men and women and this influences the decision to report	11%	15%	4%	36%	34%

crime to the police					
There are social norms that encourages discrimination against women and are rarely reported	15%	17%	2%	37%	29%
Sexual violence against women or men leads to intimidation hence resulting in the failure to report	12%	14%	1%	41%	32%
Intimate Partner Violence is prevalent in our society among women than men but rarely reported	7%	13%	0%	42%	38%
Gender based discrimination among men and women influences the crime reporting practices	14%	20%	2%	34%	30%

Source: Research Data (2025)

From the findings in Table 3, most of the respondents either agreed (36%) or strongly agreed (34%)that there is a gap in education levels of men and women and this influences the decision to report crime to the police. On the other hand, 26% disagreed (15% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed). A KI number 1 indicated;

"Yes a good percentage of men have higher education levels than women and with it comes a basic understanding of their rights under the law. That's why it is mostly men who report various crimes in our area."

The findings are congruent with findings by the National Crime and Victimization Survey (2015) which revealed that demographic factors like sex and education levels tend to have correlation with crime reporting practices. This means that those that are more educated have better understanding of the law and their rights better than those with lower education levels hence report crimes more.

Additionally, majority of the respondents agreed (37%) and strongly agreed (29%) that there are social norms that encourages discrimination against women and are rarely reported. On the contrary, 17% disagreed and 15% strongly disagreed on the existence of social norms that encourages discrimination against women. A KI number 4 stated;

"Most social norms are a product of cultural norms and therefore women find themselves being discriminated against in most instances and they do not report because they fear reprisal from men."

The findings are consistent with that by Ayodele and Aderinto (2016) found that cultural norms and social factors tend to influence crime reporting patterns in the African setting. However, the findings are not consistent with study by Rypi, Burcar and Akerstrom (2019) which established that it is men who rarely report crimes in comparison to women.

Furthermore, most of respondents agreed (41%) or strongly agreed (32%) that Sexual violence against women or men leads to intimidation hence resulting in the failure to report. On the contrary, 14% and 12% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. A KI number 6 stated;

"I was abused sexually by my husband's relative some years back. I reported the case to my elders but no action was taken. Days went by until I gave up the decision to report to the police. I always try not to remember that ordeal."

A study by Paul, Zinzow, McCauley, Kilpatrick and Resnick (2014) found that most of these sexual violence cases are unreported to the relevant authorities with the major reason being the potential loss of anonymity, stigmatization and possible recrimination. This implies that there is a lot of intimidation going around sexual violence which discourages the victims whether men and women from reporting.

The findings are in line with that of Sanz-Barbero, Otero-Garcia and Carmen (2016) which found that 20 percent of the women who had been victims of the gender violence had previously reported similar cases to the police.

Finally, the respondents were asked if they agreed that gender-based discrimination among men and women influenced crime reporting practices. Based on the outcome in Table 4.2, most respondents either agreed (34%) or strongly agreed (30%). Nevertheless, 34% disagreed (20% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed). A KI number 15 stated;

"Yes I agree that the lack of reporting of crimes is largely influenced by gender inequalities within our society and culture as it gives prominence to such issues being addressed at the community level instead of reporting them formally to the law enforcement officers."

The findings are collaborated by the gender victimization theory by Money (1955) which found that gender gap exists everywhere hence it's a universal phenomenon and in the area of crimes there is always likely to be a gender gap between male and female offenders. In the area of crime reporting, using the gender based theory; the reporting behaviors of men and women tend to differ as shaped by the societal behavioral patterns and cultural beliefs.

Ways of Mitigating Gender Disparities in Crime Reporting

In this subsection various questions and statements were presented on ways of mitigating gender disparities in crime reporting. Table 4 presents the research outcome.

Table 4 Ways of Mitigating Disparities in Crime Reporting

Statement	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
There is need to adopt the community-based interventions that seeks to eliminate gender disparities in crime reporting	8%	9%	1%	48%	34%
There is need to reform the criminal justice system to encourage both genders to report gender related inequalities	10%	17%	3%	35%	35%
The police should be fair and prompt in handling gender-based cases reported	7%	8%	2%	47%	36%
There is need to raise awareness in the community on the benefits of reporting a crime through formal channels	6%	8%	0%	50%	36%
Trainings should be undertaken to the community leaders on rights of both genders and formal channels of reporting such crimes	10%	10%	3%	43%	34%

Source: Research Data (2024)

As demonstrated by the outcome, majority of the respondents either agreed (48%) or strongly agreed (34%) that there is need to adopt community-based interventions that seeks to eliminate gender disparities in crime reporting. On the other hand, 9% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed on the need to adopt community based interventions to eliminate gender disparities in crime reporting. Most KIs agreed; a KI number 13 stated;

"There is an urgent need to carry out community sensitization on the importance of reporting crimes to the law enforcement officers because justice delayed gives a leeway for the occurrence of gender based crimes. The community elders should be highly sensitized so that they don't just encourage the overreliance on customary laws"

A study by Sahay (2021) found that community-based interventions which include raising of awareness on gender-based issues and crime reporting can help in improving crime reporting especially among women given that their rate of crime reporting is lower compared to men. It can thus be inferred that community-based interventions can be effective for instance incorporating the village managers and other local community leaders in raising awareness on crime reporting can help in eliminating gender disparities in crime reporting. Educational campaigns can be implemented within communities to inform residents about: the impact of unreported crimes, victim's rights and support systems: Highlighting how unreported crimes affect community safety and well-being is important. Further, educating individuals about their rights as victims and the resources available to them and providing information on local support services, such as counseling, legal aid, and advocacy groups can be harnessed on.

Further, majority of the respondents either agreed (35%)or strongly agreed (35%) that there was need to reform the criminal justice system to encourage both genders to report gender related inequalities. This means that there are challenges in the criminal justice system which as stated by Salgado and Nolan (2019) entails corruption and institutional bureaucracies that makes access to justice difficult. On the other hand, 17% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed that it was necessary to reform the criminal justice system to encourage both genders to report gender related crimes; this could be due to their feeling that the existing justice system is adequate.

A KI number 8 stated;
"I was very much discouraged by the level of corruption among the law enforcement officers; my attempts to report crime were met with a demand for bribes which really put me off, therefore there is an urgent need for reforms in the justice system."

A study by Wadia and Nale-Tajane (2021) stated that one of the areas that require improvement with law enforcement is encouraging the police to listen and register complaints raised by women as this may help increase the reporting rates. According to the study, in as much as this is their primary obligation, sometimes they easily dismiss the complaints from the victims and in some cases bribery is the order of the day. Salgado and Nolan (2019) also had similar findings.

As part of the solution towards gender-based disparities in crime reporting, most of the respondents either agreed (47%) or strongly agreed (36%) that the police should improve on promptness and fairness in handling gender based cases reported as this will encourage the victims to report such crimes. On the other hand, 8% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed that police should improve on promptness and fairness perhaps due to their feeling that the police has been efficient based on their experiences.

A KI number 10 stated;
"Police response time is very crucial especially when it comes to evidence gathering. In my case, the police did not show up in time at the crime scene; evidence was tampered with rendering the whole processing

ineffective as I did not get justice."

As stated by Wadia and Nale-Tajane (2021), the ability of the police to listen and address complaints has a positive influence on crime reporting.

Additionally, majority of the participants either agreed (50%) or strongly agreed (36%)that there was need to raise awareness in the community on the benefits of reporting a crime through formal channels. On the other hand, 8% and 7% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on the need to raise awareness through formal channels; this could be due to the fact that they have preference to informal reporting channel mechanisms like reporting to the elders.

A KI number 15 indicated;

"Most community members have preference for informal reporting channels like reporting to the community elders. This has seen the persistence of various discriminations; there is therefore need to raise awareness among the community members and victims of gender related crimes on the importance of crime reporting."

This finding is similar to that of Sahay (2021) which established that public activism and raising of awareness on gender based issues and crime reporting can help in improving crime reporting especially among women given that there rate of crime reporting is lower compared to men.

Finally, most of the study participants either agreed (43%)or strongly agreed (34%) that trainings should be undertaken to the community leaders at the local level like the village elders on rights of both genders and formal channels of reporting crimes like through the gender offices and the police. On the other hand, 10% and 10% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on the need to train community leaders like village elders on gender rights and formal channels of reporting gender related crimes.

A KI number 7 stated;

"Village elders are usually the first line of reporting in our community. They need to be trained on the importance of reporting especially heinous crimes as opposed to just relying on traditional mechanisms."

Wadia and Nale-Tajane (2021) established that trainings of various stakeholders involved in handling complaints especially those raised by women and men who are victims of inequalities can be effective in reducing unreported cases. It can thus be inferred that all stakeholders should be trained including community members and even the police.

V. Conclusions And Recommendations

This section discusses the study's conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

Conclusion

This section presents the conclusion of the research findings from the study based on the study's objectives. The first objective aimed at examining the relationship between gender-based cultural practices and crime reporting in Eldoret. The study concludes that gender based cultural practices can influence crime reporting practices in Eldoret. Specifically, the study concludes that some cultural practices tend to encourage gender inequalities by discouraging the victims from reporting. Further, the presence of customary laws though not formal plays a significant role in the low reporting of gender inequalities through formal law enforcement agencies.

The second objective of the study was to assess the influence of gender based social practices on crime reporting practices in Eldoret. The study concludes that gender based social practices have a negative influence on reporting of gender elated crimes in Eldoret. For instance, there are social norms that encourage discrimination against women and are rarely reported.

The third objective aimed at finding out ways of mitigating gender disparities in crime reporting in Eldoret. The study concludes that community-based interventions can be effective for instance incorporating the village managers and other local community leaders in raising awareness on crime reporting can help in eliminating gender disparities in crime reporting.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the study recommends various mechanisms of reducing disparities in crime reporting among men and women. First the study recommends that community-based interventions which include incorporating the village managers and other local community leaders in raising awareness on crime reporting should be actively employed to eliminate gender disparities in crime reporting. Forums should also be done to raise awareness on the various laws that are in place to deal with issues like gender-based violence that in most instances are not reported as found from this study.

Secondly the study recommends reforming of the criminal justice system to encourage both genders to

report gender related inequalities. For instance, encouraging the police to listen and register complaints raised by women may help increase the reporting rates. Improving access to justice and handling gender related crimes promptly can help in reducing the number of unreported crimes. Hence reforms on the criminal justice system should incorporate coming up with efficient mechanism of handling crimes reported.

The study also recommends that socio-economic empowerment programs should be enhanced to reduce gender disparities. For instance, through various community-based organizations, the people need to be empowered through education, property ownership as well as other economic empowerment programs to help eliminate gender based disputes and improve on reporting of such crimes through available resources.

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