

TITLE: Maintaining respect: men, masculinities and domestic violence against women among informal sector workers in Tanzania

ABSTRACT

Informal sector employment is growing in Tanzania. As men compete to earn money and increasing numbers of women enter into paid work to supplement household incomes, tensions within the family emerge including domestic violence against women. Gender theories assert employment is a means of constructing masculinity and poor/unemployed men are more likely use violence to reassert their masculine identity. Using individual interview and group discussion data among poor working men, this study provides deeper reflections on men's use of violence towards their female partners in times of economic hardship and in the face of increasing numbers of women seeking paid work. At the core of gender relations in Tanzania is men's ascribed status as the uncontested household head and the automatic respect conferred onto them. Men's use of violence and controlling behaviour against women is an instrument to maintain that respect by quelling insubordination from women who challenge men's ability to keep the family, and by controlling women's income earning opportunities to suppress any possibility of subversion.

KEYWORDS: Informal sector work; Poverty; Masculinities; Women's income generating activities; partner violence against women; Tanzania; Qualitative study

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania, like many sub-Saharan African countries, has experienced rapid economic and social change over the past few decades. Structural adjustment policies introduced in the 1980s (such as trade liberalisation, reduced government support for social services, and abolition of price controls), while revitalising a weak private sector, led to a retrenched public sector workforce, declines in real income, and economic hardship for many households (Mblinyi, 1993; Van Akardie, 1995; Silberschmidt, 2001). A consequence of this has been the increasing numbers of men, many of whom had been employed in the formal sector, forced to make a living from the informal sector along with increasing numbers of women seeking paid work to supplement household incomes (Van Akardie, 1995; Hollos and Larsen, 1997; Meeker and Meekers, 1997; Vyas et al. 2015). By 2014 it was estimated that 43% of all Tanzanian households had at least one member engaged in informal sector activities, up from 40% in 2006 (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2015).¹

Norms in Tanzania govern that men are the head of the household, whose primary role is to provide for the family, and women, whose responsibilities are familial, rely on their husbands for household needs (Laisser et al., 2011; Sommer et al. 2013; Jakobsen, 2014; Vyas et al. 2015). Despite these norms, both men and women play an important role in Tanzania's agriculture-dominated economy with a consistently high labour force participation rate (89% male; 84% female in 2014) (NBS, 2015). In addition to domestic duties, women have a tradition of productive work outside of the household, principally subsistence agricultural work in small farms (*shamba*); and Tanzania ranks consistently high in terms of women's economic participation (World Bank, 2016; Ellis et al. 2007).

For both men and women in Tanzania, informal sector activity forms the second largest employment sector (after agriculture) accounting for 31% of all employed men and 32% of all employed women (NBS, 2015). The characteristics of informal sector work is described as being unorganised, unregulated, and with little or no social security or governmental protection; further, the sector is labour intensive and dominated by those with lower educational attainment and socioeconomic status (Batsalelwang and Dambe, 2015). While prevalence of partner violence against women is rarely differentiated by employment

¹ The 2015 Tanzanian Integrated Labour Force Survey defines the informal sector as primarily household enterprises that do not have separate legal entity or possess financial accounts. Examples of include home-based self-employed trading, temporary and fixed markets, kiosk and street vendor.

sector, these characteristics of informal sector work are likely to yield higher rates as proposed by *Stress theory* which argues a structural dimension links lower household economic status with partner violence against women (Straus, 1990). Economic pressures, induced by spells of unemployment or sporadic employment and low or uncertain income, and individual household member demands over resources lead to arguments over money resulting in increased hostilities between husbands and wives (Gelles, 1987; Straus, 1990). Either women berate their husbands for being poor providers, or men lash out on their wives because they are unable to cope with the stress. This theory essentially asserts that violence should be higher in (though not necessarily confined to) poorer households and in households where both partners are not working. Also, an implication of this theory is that women's participation in paid work in poorer households should reduce violence if it alleviates some of the stress associated with poverty.

Men, masculinities and violence against women

The assertions from stress theory, however, ignore the “gendered” meaning of employment and more specifically the role that access to economic resources plays in constructing masculinity (Barker and Ricardo, 2005; Macmillan and Gartner, 1999; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Gender theorists conceptualise “gender” as a system of social practices that have developed to accentuate differences between men and women, and that social relations of inequality are commonly based on that difference (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Ridgeway, 2009). For example, in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa social practices have resulted in the gendered division of labour where men focus on productive work and women's work tends to focus on domestic duties and subsistence agriculture; practices that have served to reinforce men's role as the household head and primary breadwinner. Ridgeway and Correll (2004) go further and assert how these practices culminate in “Hegemonic gender beliefs” that are typically hierarchical and favour men's status and competence more than women's. These shared and widely held gender beliefs form expectations on how men and women should behave, and shape how individuals enact their roles and evaluate others within a social context. Because of its hierarchical nature, hegemonic gender beliefs are usually enforced by men and particularly in unfamiliar social contexts i.e. where the beliefs of others are not certain (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004). In their 2005 review article on masculinities, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) drew attention to the idea of “hegemonic masculinity”; a concept which emphasises that the “most honoured way to be a man” ultimately subordinates women to men and legitimises men's control over them.

While the authors stress that multiple masculinities co-exist within societies and that not all men demonstrate traits of the hegemonic form (traits that could include the use of violence to stabilise gender dominance), men do, however, position themselves towards it. Therefore, when men lack access to economic resources they may use violence to compensate for their threatened sense of masculine identity and attempt to re-establish their power at home. In addition, because masculinity is constructed in relation to femininity, the implications of men's employment (or economic status) should also be understood in relations to women's employment and economic status; and status reversals that are atypical, i.e. where a woman is employed when the partner is not or hold a stronger income, may threaten masculine identity and result in violence (Vyas & Watts, 2009). The use of violence may be further exacerbated in settings where the social environment sanctions the use of violence as an extension of male authority thus preserving gender inequalities.

Studies in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) settings have highlighted the importance of material wealth among men to secure female partners and their respect, which is central to masculine identity, and that in times of economic uncertainty and poverty, a crises of masculinity ensues with adapted or subordinated masculinities emerging (Wood and Jewkes, 2001; Silberschmidt, 2005; Groes-Green, 2015). For example, in Mozambique, economically marginalised young men gravitated towards a *sexualised masculinity* centred on building physical strength to enhance sexual performance to secure respect from women; and a *violent masculinity* through an increase in their use of controlling behaviour and violence towards their female partners (Groes-Green, 2009). Both these forms of masculinity have been documented in South Africa where violent masculinity also manifested itself in public spaces in the form of men's violence towards other men (Gibbs et al. 2015).

Masculinities and violence against women in Tanzania

In Tanzania, qualitative studies conducted in the 1990s (in Dar es Salaam (DSM) and rural Kilosa, Morogoro Region) began to document that increasing work insecurity and uncertain incomes resulted in many men not being able to fulfil their social responsibilities and expectations. As women took on new roles, that included engaging in income earning activities, men's roles became unclear leading to a weakening of control over women and the household (Meeker and Meekers, 1997; Silberschmidt, 2001). The result was men's resentment and hostility towards women's expanding access to a cash income and a subsequent retreat from responsibilities (Meeker and Meekers, 1997; Silberschmidt, 2001).

The study in DSM observed high rates of abandoned women; extra-marital relationships; excessive drinking (among men) and documented the daily occurrence of aggression and violence between men and women (Meeker and Meekers, 1997).

This study builds on this early work and using individual interview data and focus group discussion (FGD) data collected among men working in the informal sector in DSM and Mbeya City, it explores how men maintain “respect” in their relationships in times of economic hardship. This study does so by examining men’s perceptions about themselves, their work; their wives work and how it effects household relations including the use of domestic violence. To guide this exploration, I drew on the literature on the constructions of masculinity that seek to explain power relations and the use of violence in the family as the basis for this study’s conceptual framework.

Research Setting

DSM is Tanzania’s commercial centre with a high concentration of trade and services compared to other parts of Tanzania. The city has a population of 4.4 million (in 2012), split into its three administrative districts (Temeke, Kinondoni, Ilala), and the average annual rate of population growth, in the ten years to 2012, was 5.6%—making DSM one of Africa’s fastest growing cities (United Nations Development Report (UNDR), 2015). Although entirely urban, a large proportion of the city’s population live in informal settlements (Rasmussen, 2013). In 2014, with an employment rate of 72% among males and 49% among females, 65% of households had one member engaged in informal sector work (higher than the national average and up from 57% in 2006) (NBS, 2007; NBS 2015). The most common employment industries for both men and women were trading and agriculture followed by transport, manufacturing and construction (for men) and hospitality and private home-based enterprises (for women) (NBS, 2015).

Mbeya region is a more provincial area in the Southwest of the country (bordering Zambia and Malawi) and is comprised of eight districts including Mbeya City. The economy of Mbeya region is agrarian, primarily small scale farming although a few tea and coffee plantations exist, which provides the main source of income for over 80% of the population (United Republic of Tanzania, May 18 2016). In 2012 the population of Mbeya was 2.7 million, of which two-thirds was rural, and the average annual population growth rate was

2.7% (UNDR, 2015). While disaggregated employment characteristics for Mbeya region is not available, using “Other urban” (excludes DSM) as a proxy for this setting yields a high employment rate—81% among males and 72% among females; and 57% of households have one member engaged in informal sector activities (up from 54% in 2006) (NBS, 2007; NBS 2015).

Although at a national level Tanzania is classified by low levels of human development, by region DSM and Mbeya rank among the better off areas (in 2012). Despite this, in Mbeya, the poverty headcount was almost two-thirds (63.3%) and almost one-quarter (23.6%) of the population live in extreme poverty. These levels are much higher compared with those in DSM where the figures were 25.8% and less than 10% respectively. Finally, prevalence of partner violence against women in both study sites is high. The WHO study on domestic violence and women’s health documented lifetime prevalence of physical or sexual partner violence to be 41% in DSM and 56% in Mbeya; and current prevalence (past 12 months) to be 22% and 29% in the respective study sites (Garcia-Moreno et al. 2006).

METHODS

This study draws on data from sixteen individual interviews and seven FGDs conducted among working poor men from January to March 2009. The number of individual interviews was split seven in DSM and nine in Mbeya (see Table 1 for respondent characteristics). Three FGDs were conducted in DSM (two in Kinondoni and one in Temeke districts) and four FGDs were conducted in Mbeya City (see Table 2). In both sites two FGDs were conducted between men ages 35 years or more (older) and one FGD (in DSM) and two FGDs (in Mbeya) were conducted with men ages 18-35 years (younger). Each FGD consisted of between 9-12 participants. In total seven different locations were visited, from both sites, to conduct the FGDs and all nineteen respondents were selected from these seven locations. Individual interviews were conducted in order to gain a deeper insight into individual lived experiences on how gender roles play out within a household, while FGDs were conducted in order to capture publicly held opinions and beliefs on men's and women's roles within the community.

TABLE 1 & 2 HERE

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling method—the criteria used was that men were 1) working in the informal sector; 2) married or cohabiting; 3) partnered with women engaged in income generating work. A male interviewer and moderator (interview team) were recruited to collect the data. First we (author and interview team) discussed and identified where there would likely be concentrations of men working in the informal sector. In DSM it was decided to visit a garage; construction site; and a market place. In Mbeya the team decided to go to a place where porters (or cart pullers) would wait (the waiting area is known locally as a *kijiweni*) and market places.

The interviewers visited the sites, introduced themselves to a few men and explained the study to them. The interviewers then asked the men if they would be willing to participate in either an individual interview or group discussion on men's and women's lives. The study was introduced to all individual interview and FGD participants as an exploration of men's and women's work and its effects on household relationships. A consent form was administered to all participants who could then decide whether or not to participate in the study.

The individual interviews and FGDs were moderated by the same male Tanzanian researcher. All individual interviews and FGDs were conducted in Kiswahili and digitally recorded (with permission from participants), transcribed verbatim and then translated into English. Individual interviews ranged from 35-47 minutes in DSM and from 25-54 minutes in Mbeya. The FGDs ranged from 1 hour 18 minutes-1 hour 44 minutes in DSM and from 1 hour-2 hours 13 minutes in Mbeya.

All participants were asked open ended questions regarding their work and their lives; women's work and how it affects relations within the household; and conflicts within the household including violence.

Data coding and analysis was undertaken (by the author) using directed content analysis which drew on the theories discussed in the Introduction to guide the initial coding of the data (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Ethical clearance was sought and obtained from regional and district commissioners and the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences; National Institute of Medical Research and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

RESULTS

Violence as tradition

Overwhelmingly in both sites men viewed that violence against female partners was common place and justified if women didn't do as they were told or made mistakes. In DSM a FGD participant relayed that men had just gotten into a habit of beating women:

'we are told that a donkey can't move until it is hit and even if you talk to it, you hit it!' (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

What is particularly interesting to note from this statement is how beliefs are passed down through the generations *'we are told....'*. This theme came through in other FGDs, for example, in the FGD with petty traders in DSM, a respondent spoke about a gift of a *'small stick'* men are given at their wedding so that they can demonstrate authority better!

Reasons for the use of violence were provided in the individual interviews. Two men in DSM reported that they had ever been physically violent towards their female partners because of signs of disrespect—one respondent described how he became angry when his wife spoke to him in a manner that displeased him (*younger car mechanic, DSM*), and the other was violent towards his wife for going out late after repeatedly being told not to (*older tailor, DSM*). In Mbeya five respondents reported they had used physical violence and a commonly cited reason was suspicion about their wives infidelity. Although one respondent did acknowledge that he was the reason for fighting because of his excessive drinking (*older porter, Mbeya*).

Despite the acceptance of the use of violence under certain circumstances, a few men in the FGDs acknowledged that women are sometimes beaten unfairly because they don't have a *'voice'* and because some men have *'low understanding'* and just lash out *'men are created with anger'* (*older petty trader, FGD, Mbeya*).

Ultimately, however, violence is used by men as a way of achieving respect and to reassert the gender order. Whether a woman is beaten is dependent on her attitude, or rather if she fails to perform according to her ascribed subordinate position; as one FGD participant

from Mbeya said: *'some women are naturally not obedient!'* (younger farmer/petty trader, FGD, Mbeya).

Informal sector work and challenges to traditional notions of masculinity

When asked about the type of work that they do and what it means for the household, in all individual interviews and FGDs, and in both sites, men spoke about the numerous obstacles and difficulties they faced with their work and that their uncertain and low income meant they faced economic hardship.

Some men expressed characteristics of low self-esteem, believing that they were not valued by others in society, but their lowly status and limited education meant they had no alternative but to tolerate their lives. One individual interview respondent from DSM said:

'As a man you struggle. We are supposed to be strong but I sometimes cry while looking for work' (younger labourer, DSM).

In the FGDs, car mechanics in DSM spoke how they were not respected by their clients who often decided unilaterally a low price to pay for the service; and porters in Mbeya felt isolated as a group that people were prejudiced towards citing that they were treated like *'beggars'* (*ombaomba*) by some customers or like *'hooligans'* (*wahuni*) by the police. Other challenges included the threat of illness because of ill-equipped and poor working environments. The absence of protective apparatus in garages adversely affected some men's health leading to days off work and loss of income. Market traders in DSM blamed globalisation for their hardship because it favours large businesses meaning small scale traders could not compete or buy large wholesale quantities. In Mbeya, farmers, who also sold their produce in the market place, complained that the high price of fertilizer and additional government levies made it harder for them because they have to pass on the higher costs and levies to their customers.

The challenges of having low and uncertain income were not, however, exclusive to the informal sector as one respondent in DSM explained:

'I used to work for the government as a "soil engineer". Unfortunately I quit because it was not paying well; I was better off in the streets!' (younger labourer, DSM).

In DSM respondents from both individual interviews and FGDs said that they were generally able to meet the day to day requirements of providing food, rent and school fees, but for some the amount would not *'advance them'*. For example buying land or a home was not feasible. In Mbeya, the situation for men appeared tougher and many found it a challenge to cover their daily needs to the extent that feeding the family was a problem. For example, an older petty trader said that some days his children may only get two meals a day.

Other pressures on finances were relayed by both younger and older participants. The expectation to marry and to pay a bride-price means that it is important for men to acquire sufficient personal wealth. One younger respondent in DSM articulated that he was finding it hard to save money, and that he was already experiencing pressure from his female partner to provide the bride-price; and older and married participants felt that the pressures of their familial responsibilities to be the main provider, which often included their extended family, added to their woes.

Maintaining respect

The impact of men's economic situation on their relationship with their female partners was not lost on the respondents. As one younger respondent from a FGD in DSM said:

'our situation needs perseverance and only women with brains can settle down' (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

Such a woman (with brains) understood the sporadic nature of men's work; knew how to deal with and get through hard times and how to budget and restrain spending; and would accept her husband's advice on how to spend the money he earned. Ultimately, she understood her subordinate gendered role and position in society. However, this type of woman was not the norm as a different respondent from the same FGD went on to say:

'maybe out of ten women one or two is wise' (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

In Mbeya, a younger porter stressed the importance of men revealing their earnings to

women from the very start of the relationship in order to prepare them for harder times because while some women are able to withstand the hardship *'others run away'* (younger porter, FGD, Mbeya).

Instead respondents, particularly younger respondents, described Tanzanian women as shallow because they were not able to understand the fluctuating nature of men's income as demonstrated in the following comment:

'When the money is good our wives are shining. When the signs of hunger approach, (a fall in income), then they (women) become a bit of an enemy' (younger porter, FGD, Mbeya).

Men felt that women were criticising them for being poor providers or they were accused of being reckless with money, spending it on drink and/or other women. In both sites, men view this as women showing disrespect and contempt towards them, counter to good wifely behaviour and the antecedent to conflicts and fights within the home as was exemplified by one respondent *'nothing angers quite like a statement'* (older labourer, FGD, DSM).

'she talks about wealthy people nearby who have higher standard of life so I get angry and beat her' (older petty trader, FGD, Mbeya).

'If my wife tells me anything about money I snap, for example, is she asks for money for important things that I can't afford then I feel as if she disrespects me and is building enmity, at the end there is fighting' (older petty trader, FGD, Mbeya).

How men view women in paid work

When asked their opinions about women working, men in both sites generally agreed that it is something *'normal and good'* and started discussions by valuing the contribution women made to the household. In addition, men articulated that a stay-at-home wife without productive work is not the norm and she is considered *'idle'* with limited power to borrow from her family and therefore has less worth to the household.

In DSM men acknowledged that women's paid work is essential for family survival and that it helps poorer households get through rougher times by allowing smoothing of income fluctuations:

'with my wife's business we have unity, when we do anything we do so together even if I didn't ask. Sometimes I ask her what she has and I say what I have. We add up and do something' (older trader, FGD, DSM).

The more desperate economic situation in Mbeya meant that it was not an option for men to allow their wives to stay at home while they bring back so little. For the porters, who likened their work to 'gambling' (*kamari*) because theirs was a game of chance for money, their wives working was a matter of urgency and importance. From the interviews, two respondents in DSM reported their wives were engaged in income earning activities compared with six respondents in Mbeya.

'I decided for my wife to do business because she was just sitting at home. I leave for work in the morning and I find her in the same place when I come back. I thought this is not good. She must work and earn something to help' (older trader, DSM).

'Because of the economy I might be shaken if she is dependent on me and then we fail to run our lives. So I used my personal efforts to look for a place for her to do business' (younger street hawker, Mbeya).

What is particularly notable from the two quotes is how men position their wives paid work as their decision. Thus men have exerted their control and maintain their status as the head of the household and primary decision-maker.

Women's work and challenges to masculinity

In both sites, men acknowledged that permitting women to work does not always go without complications for household relations. In DSM men generally agreed that if women are able to make their business a success, both men and women should sit down and discuss together how their money should be allocated. However this practice was not the reality because men are expected to pay for all household expenses while women's money is their own and they alone decide what to do with it. Men were quick to accuse women of having

“poor thoughts” when it came to spending as they were only interested in spending it on themselves or their natal family. Thus the concept of income pooling in the household was more of a notional one:

‘The aim for women to work is to help with the household income. But this system for Tanzanian woman is not there; come rain or shine the burden of the family will always be on the man’s shoulder’ (older trader, FGD, DSM).

‘the first thing they plan is to buy wax, then a wig, then clothes and this is wrong for the loan takers, and not only for women but also for men’ (older petty trader, FGD, Mbeya).

Older men in DSM spoke of how in the past a woman’s husband provided for all her needs but that now, though women were earning they still carried the mentality to be taken care of financially. Some rationalised this as women viewing a husband who encourages his wife to seek paid work as not a responsible head and because of this women start to hold their incomes. Younger men acknowledged that women’s disclosure of their income depended on how men had behaved towards women. If the relationship was not one of openness and sharing in the beginning, i.e. if men had not shown all their income to women, then women will also not show the money that they earn. In addition, younger respondents acknowledged men’s behaviours when they had money could influence women’s behaviour:

‘when we have little we expect our wives to understand but I have seen men who when they get money forget their wives who had always been there....men see these women as old and they go to other women who didn’t even struggle with them’ (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM)

Women’s work and threats to masculinity: Infidelity

In both sites men acknowledged that women in paid work bring challenges to society. With financial independence comes changing behaviours that bring further conflicts and fights between men and women. The very factors that become empowering for women—social networks and financial independence—become threatening to men and a key component of this is jealousy and women’s greater sexual freedom. A greater social network facilitates exposure to a wide range of people including other men.

One younger respondent in DSM spoke of rumours surrounding certain types of work, e.g. *mama ntilie* (food vendor), that would lead to potentially relationship destroying gossip:

'our families tell us that someone else has planted an orange in your farm and you eat those oranges' (the woman is unfaithful and the man raises another man's child) (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

Another respondent from the same FGD said that some women in fact do not want to work for money but to meet men and have sex! A theme that also came through among younger men in Mbeya:

'It depends on the business she is doing because there are some that might bring fights. For example she might leave for a week, e.g. digging potatoes in the fields but you might not believe she was at work' (younger petty traders/farmers, FGD, Mbeya).

It was common to hear men in all four Mbeya FGDs bring up the challenges women's work in evening and night markets placed on the relationship. Many marriages broke as a result of women's work there because those market places were full of divorced women who convince those who are married to divorce or separate to gain more freedom.

Threats to masculinity: When she is the breadwinner

In both sites, men's fears of losing control over women became even more pronounced when women earn more. To rule the house requires the power of money so women's economic success, relative to men's, further threatened men's sense of authority and status as the head of the household. When asked who earns more, all respondents from the individual interviews, and in both sites, reported that they earned more than their partners. From the FGDs, men's observations were that women with money become all too aware of their importance. They stop caring about their husbands' opinions and become less respectful—women with money "*pride rise*"—and the result is loss of family harmony and sometimes even the relationship. As one participant in DSM said: *'It is the woman who builds and destroys the house'* (older trader, FGD, DSM).

In DSM some FGD participants expressed a sense of inevitability that once a woman starts her business, the income she generates is likely be greater than her partners resulting in

the woman becoming the main household provider. Some respondents had observed that this form of household was increasing and that men have no option but to be dependent on their wives. Women start to control their husbands conferring them less say:

'those are the streets where we see our lives. A woman in a high state and a man in a low state; there is no relationship there at all.....she is the one who makes the rules' (older labourer, FGD, DSM).

If men argue they are humiliated both in the home and publicly:

'I know a man, his wife had money, and he was chased out of the home and was told to grind cassava leaves. If he refused, she threatened to find another man' (older trader, FGD, DSM).

'If you upset her she will publicly embarrass you saying you are "a man only with trousers" (you have nothing) "I take care of you!" (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

Even with women's advancement and changes in behaviours, there was a feeling among men in DSM that women in paid work are conferred protection from partner violence because of their money. Also, because of their own economic dependence (when women earn more) men have become powerless against women's changing behaviours and their only option is to endure their loss of pride. If a woman is beaten then it would be a smaller beating compared to what she would have received:

'a woman who has money while you have none can come home any time she wants and drunk. It would annoy you but you have to ignore it to protect the bush so you don't set fire to it and then regret it in the morning!...Problems arise when a woman with no money comes home drunk, then the man has to punch her right there' (younger car mechanic, FGD, DSM).

'if I start an argument she can do anything to me...she can even file a complaint against me... and I can do nothing because I depend on her. I must stop arguing with her even though what she does angers me...it will burn but I have to blow on the

wound and move on' (older labourer, FGD, DSM).

In Mbeya, younger respondents also observed that women were the main provider in some households that put a strain on the relationship:

'if a woman is in upper position and you are in a lower position she may despise you; she may go to bars, what will you do? She is the one with money' (younger porter, FGD, Mbeya).

The notion that women should be humble to men and that men should not be answerable to women was still very much ingrained in Mbeya participants:

'The bible says a woman is the feet and the man the head, so if I answer to a woman I deny my being the head' (older petty trader, FGD, Mbeya).

Even if women are earning they cannot disrespect their husbands and she must follow traditional procedures as expected. The household setup is that either men are the uncontested head of the household—discussions and bargaining are not possible because to invite women into discussions is to invite her to be on the same level as her husband—or they separate. Many men feared economically better-off women would either retreat into their own sphere within the household—i.e. they would conduct their businesses without involving their husbands and make future plans by themselves—or they would leave altogether. Therefore, while women earning money was good, to preserve male honour, men must control women's engagement in income earning activities and the amount women earn should not exceed their husbands.

DISCUSSION

The poverty—violence nexus in developing societies has received much attention over the past two decades with many studies, from LMIC, observing raised tensions within households (Hughes et al., 2015). As men (and women) struggle to adapt to changes in gender roles, resulting from a changing political, social and economic environment, increases in violence by men against their female partners, often used as a form of control to reinforce male authority and dominance, have been documented (Barker and Ricardo, 2005; Narayan et al. 2000; Vyas and Watts, 2009; Fleming et al., 2015).

Drawing on theories of masculinities and using qualitative data gathered from poor men working in the informal sector in DSM and Mbeya, Tanzania, this study explores men's use of violence as an instrument to maintain authority and respect given their own economic hardship and in the face of an increasing presence of women in paid work. A limitation of this study is that it does not include the perspectives from men working in the formal sector, thus limiting the ability to make generalisations. Nevertheless, the dominance of informal sector work, outside of agricultural productive activity, makes this an extremely important group to consider. In addition, although the data is from 2009, the findings from this study are still important and crucially relevant given the continued high levels of informal sector work, for both men and women, and a national rate of physical or sexual partner violence that has not changed since this study was conducted—44% and 46% in 2010 and 2016 respectively (TDHS 2010; TDHS 2016).

Gender theory conceptualises social relations and interactions as being carried out within a framework where gender functions as the primary organizing principle (Ridgeway, 2009). Within this framework men and women gravitate towards a “hegemonic” gender belief that in many traditional settings place men as the household's only or prime decision maker, and sanctions men's use of violence towards their wives (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). The hierarchical and gendered nature of the relationship between men and women and the use of violence to maintain the inequality was evident in this study. Nothing symbolised this more than the comment that on marriage men are given sticks to “beat wives”. In her study in Northern Tanzania, Jakobsen (2014) went as far as to say that men's use of violence against their wives was a demonstration of “doing gender”.

As noted by Silberschmidt (2001) from her study in Tanzania, and in other studies from Mozambique and South Africa, male authority and respect rests on the possession of material wealth (Silberschmidt, 2001; Groes-Green, 2009; Gibbs et al. 2015). This study found that men continue to aspire to the traditional breadwinner ideology that is based on the acquisition of material wealth and providing for all their families needs. Thus an automatic authority is conferred onto men by keeping women dependent. This traditional route to securing respect from wives was exemplified in this study by the young porter in Mbeya *'When the money is good our wives are shining. When the signs of hunger approach, then they become a bit of an enemy'*. Women's expression of dissatisfaction of men's low contribution to family upkeep is considered an affront to masculinity and is a threat to men's pride. In this study, and in both sites, men expressed how this led to instances of aggressive behaviour towards their wives. Although this was more strongly articulated in Mbeya than in DSM, it is not clear if this is because men in Mbeya were faced with a harder economic situation or because they were more open in the FGD. However, what came through in both sites is if women do not respond to a challenging economic situation according to gendered expectations, then this can result in violence.

A theme that emerged from this study is the apparent shift in beliefs among men that, because the economic climate makes it difficult for men to be the households' sole income earner, women's engagement in paid work is now an essential strategy for family survival. However, a threat to masculinities to emerge from women's engagement in income earning activities is women's sexual empowerment. Studies in SSA have found that as women become economically empowered, a nuanced sexual culture develops whereby, women operate more independently in terms of their choice of sexual partner (as found in Kenya) or in a harsher economic climate women engage in a transactional sexual economy (as found in Madagascar) (Cole, 2005; Spronk, 2005). In this study, men perceived that as women's financial situation improves, and in particular improves in relation to that of men's financial situation, the balance of power would shift with men struggling to maintain control over their household. Men perceived greater economic independence allows women to push back against normative gender-roles by striving for greater economic mobility and with acts of defiance such as coming home late and answering back; and at the route of these displays of impertinence is women's pursuit of sexual pleasure. So, while the shift in men's beliefs is encouraging, in terms of opening up opportunities for social change and moving towards greater gender equality, it is a moderate shift which is compensated by men's exaggerated

control over the income earning activities that women can undertake—a strategy used to limit women’s autonomy and possibilities to subvert in order for men to maintain a superior status. This is in line with other studies in SSA that have also found how men’s economic marginalisation results in prioritising control over female partners as a way of maintaining respect and their sense of self-worth. For example, in South Africa young men would monitor their wives or girlfriends phone messages to ensure that she was not cheating on them with other men (Gibbs et al. 2015). In this study, while men found it difficult to fulfil their roles as household heads, women were still expected to conduct themselves according to gendered lines. If women deviate, for example by choosing to work in sectors deemed inappropriate or by not fulfilling their domestic duties, men’s responses, shaped by the patriarchal framework, is to, sometimes, use violence. This came through among female market traders in Mbeya and DSM where family harmony was maintained when women sought permission from their husbands to engage in paid work; obtained start-up capital from their husbands; and when they worked in activities and in locations approved by their husbands (Vyas et al. 2015).

This study did not explore other aspects of subordinate masculinities arising from poverty that has been documented in other SSA studies, such as men’s relationships with other women and violence in public spaces. Further research on these aspects, particularly among young men, because of Tanzania’s rapidly expanding youth population, is recommended. It is estimated that from 2009-2025, the working age population in Tanzania will increase by, on average, 854,000 people every year (World Bank, 2009), and many of these will potentially look to an already overcrowded informal sector for their livelihood. Competition to earn an income will become increasingly fierce, as one younger respondent from Mbeya stated “*there is little water and many crocodiles*”. The implications for men’s self-worth and subsequent behaviours, including an increase in the use of violence, through constructions of new and subordinated masculinities cannot be ignored.

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Table 1: Description of individual interview respondents

Interview No.	Respondent's occupation	Location	Wife engaged in income earning activity	Wife's occupation
DAR ES SALAAM				
1	Spice / pilau seller	Market	Yes	Mama lishe (Food vendor)
2	Watchman	Construction site	Yes	Petty trader
3	Labourer	Construction site	Not currently	Mama lishe (Food vendor)
4	General /	Garage	No	
5	Car mechanic	Garage	No	
6	Trader (phone vouchers)	Market	Not currently	Sold Batik
7	Tailor	Market	Not currently	Previously helped husband
MBEYA				
1	Tailor	Market	Yes	Part time fruit seller
2	shoe peddler	Market	Yes	Joint with husband
3	Coconut seller	Market	No	
4	Porter	Waiting place	No	
5	Cart puller	Waiting place	No	
6	Petty trader	Market	Yes	Sells boiled milk (joint livestock ownership)
7	Petty trader - soap	Market	Yes	Joint with husband
8	Petty trader - kitchen utensils	Market	Yes	Market trader
9	Porter	Waiting place	Yes	Market trader - vegetables

Table 2: Details for FGD

FGD Number	Location	Age of participants	Type of work
DAR ES SALAAM			
1	Garages	Younger	Car mechanics
2	Construction site	Older	Manual labourers
3	Market place	Older	Petty traders
MBEYA			
1	Waiting area	Younger	Porters
2	Market place	Younger	Farmers/petty traders
3	Market place	Older	Petty traders
4	Market place	Older	Petty traders