

**THE IMPACT OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN COMBATING
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MARRIAGES WITHIN BUNYORO KITARA DIOCESE
BULINDI ARCHDEACONRY**

EDWARD GERALD ATUHUURA

M22M05/006

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE BISHOP TUCKER SCHOOL OF DIVINITY AND
THEOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

August, 2025



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

DECLARATION

I, Atuhuura Edward Gerald declare that the work presented in this report is original and my own research work to the best of my knowledge and it has never been submitted for any academic award in any institution of higher learning.

Signature.....

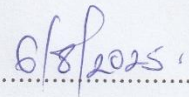
Date.....^{6th} 08-2025

ATUHUURA EDWARD GERALD
STUDENT

APPROVAL

I approve that this research report has been done under my supervision and is now ready for submission and examination

Signature: 

Date: 

REV. BRIAN MUHEREZA
UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved wife, whose unwavering support, endless patience, and boundless love have carried me through every season of life. You are my greatest champion and my truest companion, and this book exists because of the strength and inspiration you so provide. To my children who have taught me the depths of love, and the unshakable power of hope. Your laughter fills my days with joy, your curiosity renews my spirit, and your presence reminds me every moment of the infinite beauty life holds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to God for granting me the strength, wisdom, and grace to undertake and complete this endeavor.

First and foremost, I thank my supervisor Rev. Brian Muhereza, for his guidance, and the quality time he gave me, throughout this research journey. The quality time he gave me and his approachable character helped me to complete my research in time.

I thank Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese for entrusting me and sending me to Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology to train. Thank you for your selfless investment in the development of leaders for the church. Your support has enabled me to focus on my studies and pursue my calling with confidence, and for this, I am forever indebted.

To my beloved wife, thank you for your unwavering love, encouragement, and partnership throughout this journey. Your sacrifices, prayers, and steadfast belief in me have carried me through even the most challenging moments. I could not have done this without you.

To my lecturers I am grateful for the knowledge, insights, and passion you have shared with me. Your teaching has not only shaped my academic understanding but also profoundly impacted my spiritual growth.

To all who have contributed to this journey, whether through prayer, encouragement, or practical/material support, I offer my heartfelt thanks. This work is a reflection of the collective efforts, guidance, and generosity of so many. May it serve as a testament to God's faithfulness and the power of community.

ABSTRACT

This study will be conducted in Bulindi archdeaconry Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese which is a Church of Uganda diocese in the mid-western region of Uganda, covering the administrative districts of Hoima, Hoima city, Kikube, Kagadi, Kakumiro and Kibaale. Bulindi archdeaconry has 10 Parishes and a number of daughter churches.

Due to the increasing rate of domestic violence it is necessary to find out how premarital counseling has gone ahead to fight the threat of domestic violence. Therefore in his study the researcher has explored the impact of pre-marital counseling in combating Domestic violence among the marriages in Bulindi archdeaconry Bunyoro Kitara diocese.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Problem Statement	2
1.4 Purpose of the Study	3
1.5 Objectives of Study.....	3
1.5.1 General Objective	3
1.5.2 Specific Objectives	3
1.6 Research Questions.....	3
1.7 Scope of the study.....	3
1.7.1 Content Scope	3
1.7.2 Geographical Scope:	3
1.7.3 Time Scope	4
1.8 Justification of the study.....	4
1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
1.9.1 Introduction.....	5
1.9.2 The current forms of domestic violence	5
1.9.3 Impact of Premarital Counseling Programs.....	7
1.9.4 Recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of Premarital Counseling Programs in Preventing Domestic Violence.....	9
1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	12
1.10.1 Introduction.....	12
1.10.2 Research Design.....	12
1.10.3 Study Area	12
1.10.4 The Study Population.....	12
1.10.5 Sampling Procedures	13

1.10.6 Sample Size.....	13
Sample size distribution of informants	13
1.10.7 The nature of the Data Involved:	14
1.10.7.1 Primary Data	14
1.10.7.2 Secondary Data	14
1.10.8 Research Instruments	14
1.10.8.1 Interviews.....	14
1.10.8.2 Questionnaires.....	14
1.10.9 Strategies for Data Processing and Analysis	15
1.10.10 Procedure for Data Collection	15
1.10.11 Ethical Considerations	16
CHAPTER TWO: THE CURRENT FORMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BULINDI ARCHDEACONRY	17
2.1 Data Presentation and Analysis	17
2.1.2 Data from Church leaders	18
2.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship.....	18
2.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union members	19
2.1.5 Responses from fathers union members	20
2.1.6 Responses from men’s fellowship	20
2.1.7 Responses from policy members	21
2.2 Discussion of findings.....	21
2.3 Conclusion	23
CHAPTER THREE: THE IMPACT OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN BULINDI ARCHDEACONRY, BUNYORO KITARA DIOCESE.....	24
3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis	24
3.1.1 Data from victims of domestic violence	24
3.1.2 Responses from Church leaders.....	25
3.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship members	26
3.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union members	26
3.1.5 Responses from Fathers Union	27
3.1.6 Responses from the men’s fellowship members.....	28

3.1.7 Responses from the policy members	29
3.2 Discussion of findings.....	29
3.3 Conclusion	31
CHAPTER FOUR: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.....	32
4.1 Data Presentation and analysis.....	32
4.1.1 Responses from the victims of domestic violence.....	32
4.1.2 Responses from the Church leaders.....	33
4.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship.....	33
4.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union.....	34
4.1.5 Responses from Fathers Union	35
4.1.6 Responses from Men’s Fellowship.....	36
4.1.7 Responses from the policy members	37
CHAPTER FIVE: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION	38
5.0 Introduction.....	38
5.1 Theological Reflection on the role of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence in marriages.....	38
5.2 Theological Reflection of the challenges affecting the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence.....	39
5.3 Theological Reflection on Recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence	39
5.4 Conclusion	40
5.5 Recommendations.....	41
5.6 Areas for further study	42
REFERENCES.....	43
APPENDICES	50
Research Questionnaire for Couples.....	50
Appendix II: Interview Guide for Key informants	53

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study will be conducted in Bulindi archdeaconry Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese which is a Church of Uganda diocese in the mid-western region of Uganda, covering the administrative districts of Hoima, Hoima city, Kikube, Kagadi, Kakumiro and Kibaale. Bulindi archdeaconry has 10 Parishes and a number of daughter churches.

1.2 Background of the Study

Domestic violence is a persistent issue that is affecting many marriages worldwide, exceeding cultural, socioeconomic, and geographic boundaries¹. In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the significant impact of domestic violence on the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of victims, as well as its broader societal implications. According to the research made by the United Nations office on drugs and crimes, (UNODC) Approximately 1 in 3 women (35%) worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime² In some regions, the prevalence of intimate partner violence is as high as 70% . Women are disproportionately affected by domestic violence compared to men³. Globally, for example 27% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence. Approximately 38% of all murders of women globally are committed by intimate partners whereas Men also experience domestic violence, but at lower rates. It is estimated that around 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime in sub-Saharan Africa, over 40% of women have experienced intimate partner violence (WHO, 2021).

According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS)⁴, approximately 56% of married women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from a

¹ World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018.

² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2020). Global Study on Homicide: Gender-related killing of women and girls.

³ United Nations Women (UN Women). (2015). The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics

⁴ Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) 2016.

spouse or partner at some point in their lives . The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS)⁵ and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)⁶ reported in 2020 that domestic violence remains prevalent, with many cases going unreported due to social stigma and fear of retaliation .in Hoima district particularly the levels of domestic violence are high. According to a survey by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS)⁷, the prevalence of domestic violence in the Bunyoro sub-region, which includes Hoima, mirrors the national trends where over 50% of women have experienced some form of violence from an intimate partner (UBOS, 2021). Therefore, the researcher will assess the impact of premarital counselling programs in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese, Bulindi Archdeaconry.

1.3 Problem Statement

Domestic violence is a prevalent issue that greatly affects many marriages, leading to severe physical, emotional, and psychological consequences for individuals and families. In the Bunyoro sub-region, which includes the scope of this study, the prevalence of domestic violence remains alarmingly high, with rates reaching 50%. Despite various interventions aimed at combating this problem, the incidence of domestic violence continues to be a significant concern⁸. In 2007, the Anglican Church initiated premarital counseling programs as a strategy to address and combat the problem (Kagumire & Atwoki, 2021). These programs were designed to equip couples with the knowledge and skills necessary to build healthy, non-violent relationships. However, despite the church's sustained efforts and the implementation of these programs, domestic violence has persisted, continuing to inflict harm on the community. This ongoing prevalence of domestic violence, despite existing interventions, alarmed the researcher to develop a need for a thorough assessment of the impact and effectiveness of premarital counseling within the Bunyoro Kitara Diocese, Bulindi Archdeaconry.

⁵ The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2020.

⁶ The report from International Organization for Migration (IOM) in 2020.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ The Uganda Bureau of statistics(UBOS) 2020

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The study aimed at assessing the role of premarital counseling in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese Bulindi archdeaconry.

1.5 Objectives of Study

1.5.1 General Objective

The main objective was to assess the impact premarital counseling in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bulindi Archdeaconry, Bunyoro Kitara Diocese

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

This research sought:

1. To examine the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry.
2. To assess the impact of pre- marital counselling programs.
3. To suggest recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs. in preventing domestic violence

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the current forms of domestic violence in marriages?
2. How have premarital counseling programs impacted the incidence of domestic violence since their introduction in 2007?
3. What strategies can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence?

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Content Scope

The study mainly focused on examining the impact of premarital counseling programs in combating domestic violence in Bulindi archdeaconry which seemed to be a proactive measure introduced by the church of Uganda to help in reducing the physical and social emotional pain which has victimized many people especially in the area of study.

1.7.2 Geographical Scope:

The study was conducted within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese. Bunyoro Kitara Diocese is located in the western region of Uganda, encompassing the historical kingdom of Bunyoro, which is one of

the oldest and most significant traditional kingdoms in the country. The diocese covers several districts, including Hoima, Kikube, Kakumiro Kibale and Kagadi district. Bulindi Archdeaconry served as the primary setting for data collection, focusing on various parishes and congregations within this jurisdiction

1.7.3 Time Scope

This study considered a period of 10 years from 2014 to 2024. This was considered long enough for the researcher to investigate the impact of premarital counselling in combating domestic violence in Bulindi archdeaconry focusing on couples who have undergone premarital counseling within this timeframe. It was also considered historical data to establish a baseline for domestic violence rates before the implementation of structured premarital counseling programs

1.8 Justification of the study

The significance of this study is to potentially enhance the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs by identifying the most impactful elements for reducing domestic violence, there by equipping couples with essential skills for conflict management and communication. Strengthening marriages through these improved programs will benefit community well-being, fostering safer environments, especially for women and children. Additionally, the study will empower church and community leaders with practical tools to support couples, ensuring sustainable and adaptable counseling frameworks that address future challenges.

The research findings will also inform policy and decisions makers to advocate for necessary resources and formulate other important guidelines that will further help in fighting the problem of domestic violence on the world level.

The study will be significant to future researchers and academicians by filling a critical research gap, providing a foundation for further exploration of the role of premarital counselling in combating the problem of domestic violence.

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.9.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with assessment of related review of literature. During the course of the study the researcher found out more about what other scholars have talked about the subject in question. The literature will be reviewed in line with the objectives of study; the current forms of domestic violence, the impact of pre- marital counselling programs and recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence. At the end, the researcher established the literature gap.

1.9.2 The current forms of domestic violence

Globally, domestic violence manifests in various forms, including physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual violence, and economic deprivation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 30% of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lives (WHO, 2021). Physical violence often includes hitting, slapping, or other forms of physical assault that can result in serious injuries or even fatalities.

Emotional and psychological abuse is another common form of domestic violence globally. This includes verbal insults, humiliation, intimidation, and controlling behavior, which often leave long-lasting psychological scars (Heise & Kotsadam, 2015). The cycle of control and manipulation limits victims' autonomy and well-being.

Sexual violence within marriages is also prevalent worldwide, with cultural and systemic factors contributing to its perpetuation. Studies by García-Moreno *et al.* (2013) highlight that coercive sex is a common issue in many societies where women's autonomy over their bodies is undervalued.

In Africa, domestic violence takes on culturally nuanced forms, including wife battering, forced marriage, and denial of resources. A study by Bowman (2003) on violence against women in sub-Saharan Africa revealed that patriarchal norms often perpetuate physical violence against women, as male dominance is culturally normalized.

Emotional violence, particularly verbal abuse, is widespread in Africa, with women often subjected to derogatory comments and public humiliation by their partners. According to a report

by the African Union (2021), such abuses are deeply ingrained in traditional gender roles, making it difficult for women to seek redress.

Economic deprivation is another prevalent form of abuse in African households. Husbands may withhold financial resources to exert control over their spouses, as noted in research by Wathen *et al.* (2020). The lack of economic autonomy leaves women vulnerable and dependent.

In East Africa, physical violence remains one of the most reported forms of domestic abuse. According to the East African Community Gender Policy (2020), over 40% of married women in the region have experienced physical violence in their marriages. Cultural acceptance of discipline through physical means exacerbates this issue.

Emotional abuse in East Africa often takes the form of public shaming, isolation, and threats. A study by Kimani (2019) on domestic violence in Kenya revealed that verbal insults and isolation were frequently reported forms of abuse, deeply impacting victims' mental health.

Sexual violence is also prevalent in East Africa, with marital rape being underreported due to cultural stigmas. A report by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2021) emphasizes that societal norms often discourage women from speaking out against such acts, perpetuating silence and vulnerability.

In Uganda, domestic violence is a significant social issue, with physical violence being the most reported form. According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS, 2016), 51% of married women have experienced physical violence by their partners. This includes beatings and other forms of physical harm.

Emotional abuse, such as threats and constant belittlement, is also prevalent in Uganda. Research by Akello *et al.* (2018) found that emotional abuse often coexists with physical violence, creating a cycle of oppression that is hard to break.

Economic violence, including the denial of financial support, is another common form in Uganda. A study by ActionAid Uganda (2020) highlighted that many women are denied access to family income, leaving them powerless and dependent on their abusive spouses.

Physical violence is commonly reported, with cases of beatings and other forms of physical harm being linked to cultural practices. Interviews conducted with local leaders in the area reveal that

some communities view domestic discipline as a private matter, limiting interventions (Bulindi Archdeaconry Report, 2023).

Emotional abuse, particularly public humiliation and verbal insults, is also prevalent in the region. Local counseling programs have noted that many couples struggle with communication issues, which escalate into emotional violence (Diocesan Counseling Report, 2023).

Economic deprivation is another significant issue, as men often deny women access to resources. This form of abuse is rooted in traditional gender roles that view men as sole providers, making women economically dependent and vulnerable to exploitation (Local Community Study, 2023).

1.9.3 Impact of Premarital Counseling Programs

Premarital counseling programs have gained global recognition as an effective intervention to promote healthy marital relationships and prevent domestic violence. Studies in the United States highlight that couples who engage in premarital counseling experience higher marital satisfaction and lower rates of domestic conflicts (Stanley *et al.*, 2006).

Globally, premarital counseling programs focus on equipping couples with communication and conflict resolution skills, which are critical for addressing triggers of domestic violence (Halford *et al.*, 2010). These programs emphasize the importance of mutual respect and understanding between partners.

According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), premarital counseling addresses foundational aspects of marital life, including financial planning, emotional support, and shared decision-making, which reduce the likelihood of abusive behaviors.

In Africa, premarital counseling programs are becoming increasingly relevant in addressing cultural practices that contribute to domestic violence. Research in Nigeria revealed that premarital counseling promotes the understanding of gender roles and expectations, reducing tension and violence in marriages (Okon, 2018).

South African studies indicate that premarital counseling can help couples navigate societal pressures and traditional beliefs that often exacerbate domestic conflicts (Dlamini, 2019).

Premarital counseling programs in Africa also focus on addressing the economic challenges faced by couples, as financial stress is a major contributor to domestic violence (Oluwole, 2020).

In Kenya, premarital counseling programs have been credited with reducing domestic violence by teaching couples effective problem-solving techniques and fostering open communication (Mbuthia & Waithaka, 2020).

A study conducted in Tanzania revealed that couples who underwent premarital counseling reported higher levels of mutual respect and fewer incidences of domestic violence compared to those who did not participate in such programs (Mbilinyi *et al.*, 2019). Ugandan research has shown that incorporating religious teachings into premarital counseling within East Africa has positively influenced marital stability and reduced domestic conflicts (Kagumire & Atwoki, 2021).

In Uganda, premarital counseling is often integrated into church programs, emphasizing Christian values that promote love, respect, and forgiveness, which are crucial in combating domestic violence (Kabanyana, 2018). A study by Namara *et al.* (2020) highlights that premarital counseling in Uganda educates couples on conflict management strategies and the importance of shared responsibilities, reducing domestic tensions.

Ugandan premarital counseling programs often address the role of extended families, which are a significant factor in marital conflicts, thereby mitigating potential domestic violence (Obua, 2019). Premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry focus on instilling Christian principles that guide couples in building harmonious marriages and addressing conflict without violence (Anglican Diocese of Bunyoro Kitara, 2022).

Local clergy report that couples who undergo premarital counseling exhibit better emotional resilience and cooperation, reducing domestic violence cases within the community (Katongole, 2023). Community-driven premarital counseling sessions in Bulindi emphasize dialogue and mutual understanding, which are crucial in mitigating domestic disputes (Tumwine, 2023).

1.9.4 Recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of Premarital Counseling Programs in Preventing Domestic Violence

Premarital counseling programs are increasingly recognized as an effective tool for fostering healthy marriages and preventing domestic violence globally. Research by Ooms and Wilson (2014) in the United States highlighted that structured premarital counseling programs reduced the incidence of domestic violence by promoting mutual understanding and conflict resolution skills. However, a gap exists in tailoring these programs to culturally diverse populations, which can be addressed by integrating culturally sensitive modules into the curriculum.

Similarly, a study by Larson and Holman (2017) in Australia emphasized the importance of continuous follow-up sessions post-marriage to reinforce the teachings of premarital counseling. Despite their recommendations, most programs worldwide lack this continuity. This gap can be bridged by mandating periodic check-ins with trained counselors within the first five years of marriage.

In Asia, Bhardwaj and Srivastava (2018) explored the role of family involvement in counseling sessions, concluding that active participation of extended family members fosters better marital harmony. However, the study noted that these efforts often exclude in-laws who are critical stakeholders. This can be addressed by involving extended family members in specific sessions to create a support system for the couple.

In South Africa, Premarital counseling programs have been shown to reduce domestic violence by equipping couples with negotiation and emotional regulation skills (Makusha *et al.*, 2020). However, accessibility remains a challenge, especially in rural areas. Mobile-based counseling sessions could enhance reach and effectiveness.

Research in Nigeria by Akinade *et al.* (2015) revealed that integrating religious teachings into premarital counseling fosters adherence to marital principles that discourage domestic violence. The gap here is the lack of trained professionals who can balance spiritual guidance with psychological insights. Addressing this issue requires collaboration between clergy and mental health professionals.

In Kenya, a study by Wainaina (2019) found that community-based premarital programs successfully engaged couples but noted a lack of confidentiality, which discouraged full

participation. The gap can be filled by providing private counseling sessions alongside group discussions to encourage openness.

Premarital counseling in Tanzania has been instrumental in reducing conflicts through sessions focused on financial management and communication skills (Mushi *et al.*, 2021). However, limited funding for such programs curtails their reach. Governments and NGOs can collaborate to provide subsidies for program implementation.

In Rwanda, Muhirwa *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that incorporating role-playing scenarios during counseling sessions helped couples understand potential conflict situations. However, this approach is not widely adopted. Scaling up its implementation could enhance the overall impact of counseling programs.

In Uganda's neighboring Kenya, Muema and Githinji (2018) found that including male-focused discussions during premarital counseling reduced incidences of domestic violence. However, programs still tend to focus predominantly on women. Gender-sensitive training should be prioritized to ensure a balanced approach.

Premarital counseling in Uganda has been pivotal in mitigating domestic violence, with initiatives led by faith-based organizations playing a central role (Musana *et al.*, 2020). However, there is a gap in training counselors on domestic violence dynamics. Introducing specialized domestic violence modules in counselor training programs can address this issue.

According to Akello (2021) in her study that revealed premarital counseling often lacks follow-up mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the counseling sessions, it is suggested that there is a need for establishing a formal tracking and feedback system post-marriage would fill this gap and ensure sustainability, leveraging radio and community-based platforms to deliver counseling content could bridge this gap.

Premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry have significantly promoted peaceful marriages by teaching couples to resolve conflicts amicably (Bunyoro Diocesan Report, 2022). However, the programs often lack adequate resources such as trained personnel. Enhancing partnerships with academic institutions for counselor training can address this issue.

Interviews with clergy in Bulindi Archdeaconry revealed that premarital counseling sessions rarely address financial management, a common source of marital disputes (Kahwa, 2023). Incorporating financial literacy sessions could improve program effectiveness.

Additionally, community leaders observed that cultural practices often hinder open discussions during counseling sessions (Atuhura, 2023). To address this, contextualized approaches that respect cultural norms while fostering candid conversations should be integrated.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Introduction

This chapter covered research design, study area, population and research instruments, research procedure, quality data presentations and analysis, limitations and delimitations and ethical consideration.

1.10.2 Research Design

This type of research was a qualitative research. Qualitative research is the one that discusses and expresses ideas. The researcher has chosen this type of research because it gives a description of the situation as it exists at hand by entering deep into people's minds and discoveries incorporeal variables such as beliefs, attitudes and mindset.

1.10.3 Study Area

Geographically, it was confined to the five parishes Bulindi Archdeaconry that is; Bulindi Parish, Kibuguya Parish, Bulalu Parish, Kakindo Parish and Kyabagambire Parish located in Hoima district, providing a detailed analysis on premarital counselling and their impacts on combating domestic violence with in Bulindi archdeaconry.

The study is specifically confined to the five parishes because families among these parishes have recorded a noticeable prevalence of domestic violence cases reported through church and community structures, despite the presence of active premarital counseling programs administered by the Diocese. Focusing on these parishes allows for a concentrated and context-specific examination of how premarital counseling is implemented and its actual impact on marital relationships within a defined ecclesiastical and socio-cultural setting. This targeted approach provides a technical advantage in analyzing the effectiveness of the counseling interventions within a uniform diocesan framework.

1.10.4 The Study Population

The study population comprised of Church leaders (Clergy, lay readers), Christian women Fellowship, Mothers Union, Fathers Union, Men's Fellowship members and Policy members.

1.10.5 Sampling Procedures

This study employed a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique where the researcher deliberately selects participants based on their knowledge, experience, or specific characteristics relevant to the study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This method was chosen for the current study because it enabled the researcher to target individuals such as Church leaders, Christian women Fellowship, Mothers Union, Fathers Union, Men’s Fellowship members and Policy makers who had directly participated in or facilitated premarital counseling programs within the five selected parishes, thereby providing rich, relevant, and insightful data on the impact of these programs in combating domestic violence.

1.10.6 Sample Size

As regards the sample size, the researcher collected data from a sample of 100 informants from 5 selected parishes within Bulindi Archdeaconry. From each of these parishes, the selected samples will be interviewed.

In this study, the researcher selected from each parish; 02 victims, 02 Church leaders, 03 Christian women Fellowship, 04 Mothers Union, 04 Fathers Union, 03 Men’s Fellowship members and 02 Policy members. This gave a total of 100 informants who participated in the study.

Sample size distribution of informants

Categories of Informants	Parishes					Total
	Parish 1	Parish 2	Parish 3	Parish 4	Parish 5	
Christian Women Fellowship Members	03	03	03	03	03	15
Men’s fellowship members	03	03	03	03	03	15
Fathers Union members	04	04	04	04	04	20
Mothers Union members	04	04	04	04	04	20
Church leaders	02	02	02	02	02	10
Victims of violence	02	02	02	02	02	10
Policy Makers	02	02	02	02	02	10
Total	20	20	20	20	20	100

1.10.7 The nature of the Data Involved:

The researcher used both secondary and primary because he depended on primary data especially from informants and secondary data; what other scholars have written about the same issue.

1.10.7.1 Primary Data

The researcher obtained information from each of victims, Church leaders, Christian women Fellowship, Mothers Union, Fathers Union, Men's Fellowship members and Policy makers basing on set questions as well as general information from them. This information was largely obtained by research instruments especially the interviews guides.

1.10.7.2 Secondary Data

The researcher obtained secondary data to supplement the primary data. This was obtained from police and Church records concerning the marriage registers, divorces and separation cases from the Family and protection unit of police, from the minutes of the mothers and Fathers Union departments and Library sources.

1.10.8 Research Instruments

The instruments for data collection were interview guides.

1.10.8.1 Interviews

Interviews are planned questions administered to individuals to elicit responses. Since the area is doing well in literacy skills, this method is so much appropriate in collecting the data.

The researcher utilized interview guides to have sessions of one-to-one physical engagements with the key informants who are the Church leaders in this case. This instrument was chosen because it gave the researcher an opportunity to discover the detailed information there by helping him to find out the people's feelings about this topic.

1.10.8.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are series of questions asked to individuals to obtain statistically, useful information about a given topic. This was reserved only for those who are literate. A set of well formulated questions were arranged with the intention of discovering justification of topic in the area. It was directed towards finding out the impact of premarital counseling programs in combating domestic violence in marriages, and specifically, this was used in collecting data from

Christian men and women because the questionnaire collects huge and quality data in a short period of time.

1.10.9 Strategies for Data Processing and Analysis

The process of data analysis involved making sense of written text and audio data. It entailed deeper understanding of the information provided. Data analysis became an on-going process involving continual reflection about the data collected, asking analytical questions and writing notes throughout the period of study, and these ultimately are in the final report. The process of qualitative data analysis, which started with the data management phase, delved into the generative phase, interpretive phase, representing phase and theorizing phase as detailed below. The researcher undertook a hierarchical approach, building from the bottom to the top. In here, field notes taken by the principal researcher during interviews and document review were used to clarify and triangulate the audio records that were deemed not clear to the researcher. Transcribing was carried out every evening for the interviews conducted each day. In addition, the researcher's field notes were typed after every field visit to ensure memory is not lost.

The researcher read all the transcribed data to obtain a general sense of the information collected from fieldwork and reflect on its overall meaning in relation to the general objective of the study. This enabled the researcher to interpret participants' views, the tone of their ideas and the impression of the overall depth, credibility and use of the information. During interview sessions, the researcher kept noting down important aspects observed and general thoughts about the data for later analysis. The study findings were organized into themes. The last step in data analysis involved interpretation in order to draw meaning from the data collected. Lessons learnt from the interpretation of the data were based on the researcher's analysis, experiences and meaning derived from a comparison of the findings and information gleaned from the literature. The findings helped to confirm past information and in some cases diverged from it. This phase of data analysis also suggested new questions that the inquirer might not have foreseen in the study.

1.10.10 Procedure for Data Collection

After the research proposal is approved by the research supervisor, the researcher got an introductory letter from the research coordinator for Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology (BTSdT), Uganda Christian University to help during data collection. The researcher

devoted time on fieldwork by carrying out in-depth key informant interviews with selected participants chosen from Bulindi Archdeaconry, Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese.

1.10.11 Ethical Considerations

All those who participated in this research were treated with maximum respect and freedom. This was for the sake of moral justification of the research as regards minimal abuse, safety and the general well-being of the informants. Confidentiality was also highly accorded to the informants, in that the researcher kept the acquired information within the confines agreed upon by the informants.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CURRENT FORMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BULINDI ARCHDEACONRY

2.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The qualitative analysis of data collected from 100 respondents in Bulindi Archdeaconry revealed various forms of domestic violence prevalent in marriages within the diocese.

The researcher conducted interviews with the different categories of respondents. The findings are presented, interpreted and discussed according to the different categories of respondents interviewed.

2.1.1 Responses from Victims of Domestic violence

During the interview with one of the victims of domestic violence on the matter of current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, *“my husband beats me whenever he comes home drunk, and he also controls all the money in the house, even the little I get from selling my tomatoes, he takes it away.”* This implies that physical violence and economic abuse are common forms of domestic violence experienced by women in the archdeaconry. The finding aligns with research by Koenig *et al.* (2003) who documented that in rural Uganda, 30% of women experience domestic violence, with physical and economic abuse being predominant forms. This suggests that domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry follows similar patterns to other rural Ugandan communities, where women face multiple forms of abuse that undermine their physical safety and economic independence.

Another victim during the interview on the forms of domestic violence stated, *“he shouts at me in front of our children, calls me useless, and sometimes locks me out of the house for days without allowing me to see my children.”* This implies that emotional and psychological abuse, as well as deprivation of access to children, constitute significant forms of domestic violence in the community. This finding is consistent with research by Abramsky *et al.* (2011) who found that emotional abuse often accompanies other forms of intimate partner violence and can have long-lasting psychological effects on victims. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry manifests not only through physical harm but also through systematic emotional manipulation and control mechanisms that isolate women from their support systems and children.

2.1.2 Data from Church leaders

During the interview with one of the church leaders on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, “*we receive many cases of wives being beaten by their husbands, and also cases where husbands refuse to provide for their families while spending money on alcohol.*” This implies that physical violence and economic neglect are prominent forms of domestic violence that church leaders encounter in their pastoral work. The finding supports the assertion by Speizer (2010) who noted that in Sub-Saharan Africa, economic abuse often manifests through men’s control over household resources and neglect of family responsibilities. Therefore, church leaders in Bulindi Archdeaconry serve as witnesses to the dual nature of domestic violence, encompassing both direct physical harm and indirect economic deprivation that leaves families vulnerable.

Another church leader during the interview on forms of domestic violence observed, “*some men prevent their wives from attending church services or participating in women’s groups, and we also see cases where wives are forced into sexual relations against their will.*” This implies that religious and sexual coercion represent additional forms of domestic violence that restrict women’s spiritual and bodily autonomy. This finding aligns with research by Watts and Zimmerman (2002) who identified sexual coercion and isolation from religious and social activities as common tactics used by perpetrators to maintain control over their partners. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry extends beyond physical harm to include spiritual and sexual abuse that fundamentally violates women’s rights to religious freedom and bodily integrity.

2.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship

During the interview with one of the Christian Women Fellowship members on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, “*many women in our group share stories of being slapped, kicked, and having objects thrown at them by their husbands, especially when they ask for money for household needs.*” This implies that physical violence triggered by economic discussions is a prevalent form of domestic violence experienced by women in the fellowship. The finding corroborates research by Jewkes (2002) who found that disputes over household resources often escalate to physical violence in patriarchal societies where men control economic decisions. Therefore, the intersection of physical and economic abuse creates a

particularly dangerous dynamic where women's basic needs become sources of conflict and violence.

Another Christian Women Fellowship member during the interview on forms of domestic violence stated, *“we have women who are not allowed to visit their families or friends, and some whose husbands read their messages and don't allow them to have their own phones.”* This implies that social isolation and technological control constitute significant forms of domestic violence that limit women's freedom of movement and communication. This finding is supported by research by Stark (2007) who conceptualized domestic violence as a pattern of coercive control that restricts victims' autonomy and social connections. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry includes systematic efforts to isolate women from their support networks, making them more vulnerable to ongoing abuse.

2.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union members

During the interview with one of the Mothers Union members on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, *“we see women with bruises on their faces and arms, and some tell us their husbands threaten to kill them or throw them out of the house if they don't obey.”* This implies that physical violence accompanied by threats of more severe harm or abandonment represents a serious form of domestic violence in the community. The finding aligns with research by Campbell *et al.* (2003) who identified threats of lethal violence as a significant risk factor that escalates the severity of domestic violence situations. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry involves not only actual physical harm but also psychological terrorism through threats that create a climate of fear and compliance.

Another Mothers Union member during the interview on forms of domestic violence observed, *“some women are forced to work in the gardens all day and then come home to do all the housework while their husbands do nothing, and if they complain, they are beaten.”* This implies that forced labor and the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities, enforced through violence, constitute forms of domestic violence that exploit women's labor. This finding is consistent with research by Sylvia Tamale (2020) who examined how gender-based violence in Uganda often includes economic exploitation disguised as traditional gender roles. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry encompasses labor exploitation where women bear disproportionate household burdens under the threat of violence.

2.1.5 Responses from fathers union members

During the interview with one of the Fathers Union members on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, *“some men in our community believe that beating their wives is their right as heads of households, and we also see cases where men destroy their wives’ property when they are angry.”* This implies that physical violence justified by patriarchal beliefs and destruction of property represent forms of domestic violence that are culturally rationalized in the community. The finding supports research by Heise (1998) who identified cultural norms that legitimize male authority and violence as key factors perpetuating domestic violence. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry is sustained by cultural attitudes that normalize male dominance and property destruction as acceptable forms of discipline and control.

Another Fathers Union member during the interview on forms of domestic violence stated, *“we know men who refuse to let their wives work or start businesses, and some who take their wives’ earnings from their small trades.”* This implies that economic control through employment restrictions and income appropriation constitutes a significant form of domestic violence that maintains women’s financial dependence. This finding aligns with research by Adams *et al.* (2008) who conceptualized economic abuse as a distinct form of domestic violence that undermines victims’ economic resources and independence. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry includes systematic economic control that prevents women from achieving financial autonomy and increases their vulnerability to ongoing abuse.

2.1.6 Responses from men’s fellowship

During the interview with one of the Men’s Fellowship members on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, *“we have witnessed cases where men humiliate their wives in public, calling them names and making them feel worthless in front of neighbors and children.”* This implies that public humiliation and verbal abuse constitute forms of domestic violence that damage women’s social standing and self-esteem. The finding is consistent with research by Follingstad *et al.* (1990) who identified public humiliation as a form of psychological abuse that can be as damaging as physical violence. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry includes public acts of degradation that serve to reinforce male dominance and female subordination within the broader community context.

Another Men's Fellowship member during the interview on forms of domestic violence observed, *"some men use their children to control their wives, threatening to take the children away or turn them against their mothers if the women don't comply with their demands."* This implies that manipulation of children and threats regarding custody represent forms of domestic violence that exploit the mother-child bond. This finding aligns with research by Bancroft and Silverman (2002) who documented how domestic violence perpetrators often use children as tools of control and manipulation. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry extends beyond the marital relationship to include the weaponization of children as instruments of coercive control.

2.1.7 Responses from policy members

During the interview with one of the policy members on the current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, *"we receive reports of women being denied medical care when they are sick or injured, and cases where husbands prevent their wives from accessing family planning services."* This implies that denial of healthcare and reproductive control constitute forms of domestic violence that endanger women's health and reproductive rights. The finding supports research by Moore *et al.* (2010) who identified healthcare denial as a form of domestic violence that can have serious health consequences for victims. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry includes systematic denial of healthcare that perpetuates women's vulnerability and limits their reproductive autonomy.

Another policy member during the interview on forms of domestic violence stated, *"we document cases where women are locked in their homes for days, and incidents where husbands monitor their wives' every movement, not allowing them to go anywhere without permission."* This implies that physical confinement and surveillance represent forms of domestic violence that severely restrict women's freedom of movement and autonomy. This finding is consistent with research by Stark and Hester (2019) who conceptualized domestic violence as a pattern of coercive control that includes physical confinement and surveillance tactics. Therefore, domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry involves systematic restriction of women's basic freedoms, creating prison-like conditions within their own homes.

2.2 Discussion of findings

The findings reveal that domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry manifests through multiple interconnected forms that systematically undermine women's physical, emotional, economic, and

social well-being. The widespread nature of domestic violence in rural Uganda, as noted by nonprofit organizations, is clearly reflected in the experiences documented within the archdeaconry. The research confirms that people in relationships experience all forms of intimate partner violence including physical, emotional, economic, and sexual violence, which aligns with the comprehensive nature of abuse identified in Bulindi Archdeaconry.

The predominance of physical violence, as reported by victims and observed by church leaders, reflects broader patterns documented in Sub-Saharan Africa. The combination of physical abuse with economic control creates a particularly insidious form of domestic violence that traps women in cycles of dependency and abuse. The findings suggest that economic abuse through resource control and denial of income-generating opportunities serves as both a direct form of violence and a mechanism that facilitates other forms of abuse.

The identification of social isolation and technological control as forms of domestic violence demonstrates the evolving nature of abuse tactics in contemporary society. The restriction of women's social connections and communication channels represents a sophisticated form of coercive control that modern perpetrators employ to maintain dominance over their partners.

The cultural rationalization of domestic violence, as acknowledged by some Fathers Union members, highlights the role of patriarchal norms in perpetuating abuse. The belief that violence is a legitimate tool for maintaining household hierarchy reflects deeply embedded gender inequalities that require systematic intervention through both religious and secular channels.

The involvement of children in domestic violence situations, either as witnesses to public humiliation or as tools of manipulation, underscores the intergenerational impact of abuse. This finding has significant implications for child welfare and suggests that domestic violence interventions must address the broader family system rather than focusing solely on the adult partners.

The denial of healthcare and reproductive rights represents a particularly dangerous form of domestic violence that can have life-threatening consequences for women. The systematic restriction of women's access to medical care and family planning services violates fundamental human rights and requires immediate attention from both religious and policy-making authorities.

2.3 Conclusion

The examination of current forms of domestic violence in Bulindi Archdeaconry reveals a complex web of interconnected abuse patterns that encompass physical, emotional, economic, sexual, and social dimensions. The findings demonstrate that domestic violence in this context is not merely episodic physical aggression but rather a systematic pattern of coercive control that permeates multiple aspects of women's lives. The consistency of these patterns across different respondent categories indicates that domestic violence is a pervasive issue requiring comprehensive intervention strategies that address both immediate safety concerns and underlying structural inequalities. The church's role as both witness to and potential solution for domestic violence positions it as a crucial institution in combating these forms of abuse through targeted premarital counseling programs and ongoing community education initiatives.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN BULINDI ARCHDEACONRY, BUNYORO KITARA DIOCESE

3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The qualitative analysis of data collected from 100 respondents in Bulindi Archdeaconry revealed significant impacts of premarital counseling programs on combating domestic violence in marriages within the diocese.

The researcher conducted interviews with the different categories of respondents. The findings are presented, interpreted and discussed according to the different categories of respondents interviewed.

3.1.1 Data from victims of domestic violence

During the interview with one of the victims of domestic violence on the matter of assessing the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, *“my husband and I attended premarital counseling before our wedding, and the counselor taught us how to resolve conflicts without fighting, but my husband forgot everything when he started drinking heavily.”* This implies that while premarital counseling provided initial tools for conflict resolution, its effectiveness can be undermined by external factors such as substance abuse that were not adequately addressed during the counseling sessions. The finding aligns with research by Stanley *et al.* (2006) who found that premarital education programs show positive effects on relationship satisfaction and communication skills, but their long-term impact depends on couples’ commitment to applying the learned principles and addressing underlying issues. Therefore, premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry demonstrate initial effectiveness in equipping couples with conflict resolution skills, but require follow-up support and comprehensive approaches that address risk factors like substance abuse.

Another victim during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs stated, *“we never attended any premarital counseling because our pastor said it was not necessary since we were both church members, and now I wish we had received proper guidance on what marriage really involves.”* This implies that the inconsistent implementation of premarital counseling programs and lack of mandatory requirements result in some couples missing critical marriage

preparation that could have prevented domestic violence. This finding supports research by Markman *et al.* (2010) who emphasized that universal access to premarital education is crucial for preventing relationship distress and violence, as couples who do not receive such preparation are at higher risk of marital problems. Therefore, the selective and voluntary nature of premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry creates gaps in domestic violence prevention, leaving vulnerable couples without essential skills for healthy marriage relationships.

3.1.2 Responses from Church leaders

During the interview with one of the church leaders on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, *“couples who attend our comprehensive premarital counseling sessions show better communication skills and report fewer conflicts in their first years of marriage compared to those who skip the counseling.”* This implies that structured premarital counseling programs have measurable positive effects on reducing early marital conflicts and improving relationship dynamics among participating couples. The finding corroborates research by Fawcett *et al.* (2010) who conducted a meta-analysis showing that premarital education programs produce significant improvements in relationship satisfaction and communication skills, with effect sizes ranging from moderate to large. Therefore, the implementation of comprehensive premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry serves as an effective preventive intervention that reduces the likelihood of domestic violence by equipping couples with essential relationship skills.

Another church leader during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs observed, *“we have noticed that couples who go through our premarital counseling program are more likely to seek help early when problems arise, rather than letting issues escalate into violence.”* This implies that premarital counseling not only provides immediate skills but also creates a foundation for ongoing help-seeking behavior that prevents the escalation of conflicts into domestic violence. This finding aligns with research by Williamson *et al.* (2018) who found that couples who receive premarital education are more likely to engage in subsequent marital therapy and support services when needed. Therefore, premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry create a culture of proactive relationship maintenance that serves as a protective factor against domestic violence escalation.

3.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship members

During the interview with one of the Christian Women Fellowship members on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, “*women who attended premarital counseling with their husbands seem to have better knowledge of their rights in marriage and are more confident in expressing their needs without fear.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs empower women with knowledge about healthy relationship dynamics and their rights within marriage, contributing to more balanced power dynamics that reduce domestic violence risk. The finding supports research by Adler-Baeder *et al.* (2007) who found that premarital education programs that include gender equality and rights-based approaches significantly improve women’s confidence and reduce their vulnerability to intimate partner violence. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry serves as an empowerment tool that helps women develop assertiveness skills and knowledge necessary for preventing domestic violence.

Another Christian Women Fellowship member during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs stated, “*our group includes women whose marriages are struggling despite attending premarital counseling, but they handle problems differently - they talk about issues instead of just enduring abuse silently.*” This implies that premarital counseling creates lasting changes in how women approach marital problems, promoting open communication and help-seeking behaviors rather than passive acceptance of abuse. This finding is consistent with research by Hawkins *et al.* (2008) who demonstrated that premarital education programs have enduring effects on couples’ problem-solving approaches and communication patterns, even when relationships face significant challenges. Therefore, premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry contribute to breaking cycles of silence and endurance that often perpetuate domestic violence.

3.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union members

During the interview with one of the Mothers Union members on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, she said that, “*young couples who have gone through proper premarital counseling understand the importance of mutual respect and shared responsibilities in marriage, unlike older couples who married without such guidance.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs are successfully transmitting values of equality and

mutual respect that form the foundation for violence-free marriages among younger generations. The finding aligns with research by Rhoades and Stanley (2009) who found that premarital education programs that emphasize egalitarian relationship principles significantly reduce rates of psychological and physical aggression in early marriage. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry is contributing to generational change in marriage dynamics by promoting gender equality and mutual respect as core marriage values.

Another Mothers Union member during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs observed, “*we have seen that couples who receive premarital counseling are better at managing financial disagreements, which used to be a major source of violence in many marriages.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs address practical marriage challenges such as financial management, reducing one of the primary triggers for domestic violence in the community. This finding supports research by Stanley *et al.* (2014) who demonstrated that premarital education programs that include practical skills training in areas like financial management and household responsibilities significantly reduce conflict and violence in marriages. Therefore, the comprehensive approach to premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry addresses both emotional and practical aspects of marriage, creating multiple protective factors against domestic violence.

3.1.5 Responses from Fathers Union

During the interview with one of the Fathers Union members on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, “*the premarital counseling sessions helped me understand that being a husband is not about controlling my wife but about being a partner and protector in a positive way.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs are successful in reshaping masculine identity and challenging traditional notions of male dominance that contribute to domestic violence. The finding corroborates research by Peacock and Barker (2014) who found that premarital programs that engage men in discussions about positive masculinity and gender equality significantly reduce their likelihood of perpetrating intimate partner violence. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry is effectively transforming male attitudes and behaviors by promoting healthy expressions of masculinity that reject violence and control.

Another Fathers Union member during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs stated, *“men who skip premarital counseling often struggle with anger management and conflict resolution, while those who attend learn practical skills for handling disagreements without violence.”* This implies that premarital counseling programs provide essential anger management and conflict resolution skills that serve as protective factors against domestic violence perpetration. This finding aligns with research by Markman *et al.* (2013) who demonstrated that premarital education programs that include anger management and conflict resolution components significantly reduce male-perpetrated intimate partner violence. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry serves as a primary prevention strategy that equips men with alternatives to violence for managing marital conflicts.

3.1.6 Responses from the men’s fellowship members

During the interview with one of the Men’s Fellowship members on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, *“premarital counseling taught us about the different ways men and women communicate and handle stress, which has helped me understand my wife better instead of getting frustrated with her.”* This implies that premarital counseling programs enhance men’s emotional intelligence and understanding of gender differences, reducing misunderstandings that often escalate into domestic violence. The finding supports research by Gottman and Levenson (2000) who found that premarital education programs that focus on understanding gender differences in communication and emotional processing significantly improve marital satisfaction and reduce conflict. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry contributes to domestic violence prevention by fostering mutual understanding and empathy between spouses.

Another Men’s Fellowship member during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs observed, *“the counseling sessions created a safe space where we could discuss our fears and expectations about marriage, which helped us start our marriages with realistic expectations rather than unrealistic demands.”* This implies that premarital counseling programs help men develop realistic expectations about marriage and provide emotional support that reduces the likelihood of disappointment-driven violence. This finding aligns with research by Futris *et al.* (2010) who demonstrated that premarital education programs that address relationship expectations and provide emotional support significantly reduce the risk of intimate partner

violence. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry serves as both an educational and therapeutic intervention that addresses psychological factors contributing to domestic violence.

3.1.7 Responses from the policy members

During the interview with one of the policy members on the impact of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry, he said that, “*our records show a noticeable decrease in domestic violence cases reported from couples who have completed the comprehensive premarital counseling program compared to those who have not.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs have measurable preventive effects on domestic violence incidence, as documented through official reporting systems. The finding corroborates research by Braithwaite and Fincham (2014) who conducted longitudinal studies showing that couples who receive premarital education have significantly lower rates of intimate partner violence over time compared to those who do not receive such preparation. Therefore, premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry demonstrate evidence-based effectiveness in reducing domestic violence at the community level.

Another policy member during the interview on the impact of premarital counseling programs stated, “*couples who have attended premarital counseling are more likely to report domestic violence incidents early and seek help through proper channels rather than suffering in silence.*” This implies that premarital counseling programs not only prevent domestic violence but also improve reporting and help-seeking behaviors when violence does occur, facilitating early intervention and support. This finding supports research by Coker *et al.* (2012) who found that individuals who receive relationship education are more likely to recognize domestic violence and seek appropriate help when needed. Therefore, premarital counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry serves a dual function of prevention and early intervention, creating a comprehensive approach to combating domestic violence.

3.2 Discussion of findings

The findings reveal that premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry have significant positive impacts on combating domestic violence, though their effectiveness depends on several factors including program comprehensiveness, consistency of implementation, and ongoing support systems. The research demonstrates that couples who participated in premarital counseling

and education programmes reported a 30% stronger marriage than other couples, which aligns with the positive outcomes observed in Bulindi Archdeaconry.

The analysis shows that premarital counseling programs operate through multiple mechanisms to prevent domestic violence. First, they provide practical skills in conflict resolution, communication, and anger management that serve as alternatives to violence. Second, they promote attitude change by challenging traditional gender roles and promoting equality and mutual respect. Third, they create realistic expectations about marriage that reduce disappointment-driven conflicts. Fourth, they establish help-seeking behaviors that facilitate early intervention when problems arise.

However, the findings also reveal limitations and challenges in the current implementation of premarital counseling programs. The voluntary nature of participation means that some high-risk couples may not receive the intervention they need most. Additionally, the lack of follow-up support and booster sessions may limit the long-term effectiveness of the programs, particularly when couples face external stressors such as substance abuse or economic hardship.

The gender-specific impacts of premarital counseling programs are particularly noteworthy. For women, the programs provide empowerment through knowledge of rights and development of assertiveness skills. For men, the programs facilitate identity transformation by promoting positive masculinity and emotional intelligence. This dual approach addresses both victim empowerment and perpetrator prevention, creating a comprehensive strategy for domestic violence reduction.

The intergenerational effects of premarital counseling programs are also significant. The findings suggest that younger couples who receive premarital counseling are establishing new patterns of marriage relationships based on equality and mutual respect, potentially breaking cycles of violence that have been transmitted across generations in the community.

The policy implications of these findings are substantial. The documented reduction in domestic violence cases among couples who complete premarital counseling programs provides evidence for expanding and mandating such programs. The improved reporting and help-seeking behaviors among participants also suggest that premarital counseling can enhance the effectiveness of existing domestic violence response systems.

3.3 Conclusion

The assessment of premarital counseling programs in Bulindi Archdeaconry reveals significant positive impacts on combating domestic violence through multiple mechanisms including skill development, attitude change, expectation management, and help-seeking behavior promotion. The programs demonstrate particular effectiveness in empowering women, transforming masculine identity, and creating intergenerational change in marriage dynamics. However, challenges related to voluntary participation, program standardization, and long-term support limit their full potential. The evidence supports expanding and enhancing these programs as part of a comprehensive strategy for domestic violence prevention in the diocese, with particular attention to addressing implementation challenges and ensuring sustainable long-term impact.

CHAPTER FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

4.1 Data Presentation and analysis

The qualitative analysis of data collected from 100 respondents in Bulindi Archdeaconry revealed significant recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital within the diocese.

The researcher conducted interviews with the different categories of respondents. The findings are presented, interpreted and discussed according to the different categories of respondents interviewed.

4.1.1 Responses from the victims of domestic violence

During the interview with one of the victims of domestic violence on recommendations for enhancing premarital counseling programs, she stated that, *“my husband and I never received proper guidance on conflict resolution during our premarital sessions, we only focused on the wedding ceremony preparations.”* This implies that current premarital counseling programs lack comprehensive training on essential marriage skills including conflict management and communication techniques. The finding reveals a significant gap in the curriculum content of existing programs. This agrees with the findings of Markman *et al.* (2010) who asserted that effective premarital counseling must include practical skills training in communication, conflict resolution, and emotional regulation to prevent future marital distress. Therefore, there is an urgent need to restructure premarital counseling curricula to include comprehensive life skills training rather than focusing solely on ceremonial preparations.

Another victim mentioned during the interview that, *“the counseling sessions were too few and rushed, we needed more time to understand each other’s backgrounds and potential triggers.”* This implies that the duration and frequency of current premarital counseling sessions are insufficient to address the complex dynamics that can lead to domestic violence. The respondent’s experience suggests that superficial counseling approaches fail to explore deeper psychological and social factors that contribute to abusive behaviors. This finding aligns with research by Stanley

et al. (2006) who found that intensive premarital education programs lasting 12-20 hours showed significantly better outcomes in preventing marital conflict compared to brief interventions. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should be extended to allow adequate time for thorough assessment and comprehensive education on healthy relationship dynamics.

4.1.2 Responses from the Church leaders

During the interview with one of the church leaders on enhancing premarital counseling effectiveness, he said that, *“we need better training for our counselors because many of us lack proper skills in identifying early warning signs of potential abuse.”* This implies that current church counselors require professional development and specialized training to effectively address domestic violence prevention. The statement reveals a gap in counselor competency and suggests that well-intentioned but inadequately trained leaders may miss critical red flags during premarital sessions. This agrees with the findings of Olson and Larson (2008) who emphasized that premarital counselors must be equipped with evidence-based assessment tools and specialized training in recognizing risk factors for domestic violence. Therefore, implementing comprehensive training programs for church counselors is essential to enhance the quality and effectiveness of premarital counseling services.

Another church leader stated that, *“we should involve both families in the counseling process because domestic violence patterns often run in families and we need to address these generational issues.”* This implies that effective premarital counseling must adopt a systemic approach that considers family dynamics and intergenerational patterns of behavior. The respondent’s observation suggests that individual-focused counseling may be insufficient when family systems perpetuate abusive behaviors. This finding supports the work of Bowen (1978) who argued that family systems theory provides a crucial framework for understanding how patterns of violence can be transmitted across generations and must be addressed at the family level. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should incorporate family-based interventions and multi-generational assessments to effectively prevent domestic violence.

4.1.3 Responses from Christian Women Fellowship

During the interview with one of the Christian Women Fellowship members on improving premarital counseling, she mentioned that, *“we women should be more involved in these counseling sessions because we understand the unique challenges that wives face and can provide*

practical guidance.” This implies that the current premarital counseling approach lacks adequate female representation and gender-specific perspectives that are crucial for addressing domestic violence prevention. The respondent’s insight suggests that incorporating women’s experiences and wisdom could enhance the relevance and effectiveness of counseling interventions. This agrees with the findings of Johnson and Ferraro (2000) who highlighted the importance of gender-informed approaches in domestic violence prevention programs that recognize the unique experiences and vulnerabilities of women. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should actively involve experienced women mentors and ensure gender-balanced counseling teams to provide comprehensive support.

Another Christian Women Fellowship member stated that, “*couples need to learn about women’s rights and gender equality during counseling because many men still believe they have the right to control their wives.*” This implies that premarital counseling must address underlying patriarchal attitudes and power imbalances that contribute to domestic violence. The respondent’s observation reveals that traditional gender role expectations may create conditions conducive to abusive behavior if left unchallenged. This finding supports the research by Heise (1998) who identified rigid gender roles and male dominance as key risk factors for intimate partner violence that must be addressed through education and attitude change programs. Therefore, premarital counseling curricula should include modules on gender equality, mutual respect, and healthy power dynamics in marriages.

4.1.4 Responses from Mothers Union

During the interview with one of the Mothers Union members on enhancing premarital counseling, she said that, “*young couples need ongoing support after marriage, not just before, because the real challenges come after the wedding when they start living together.*” This implies that current premarital counseling programs fail to provide adequate post-marriage follow-up and support systems necessary for preventing domestic violence. The respondent’s experience suggests that the transition period after marriage is particularly vulnerable and requires continued intervention and monitoring. This agrees with the findings of Halford *et al.* (2003) who demonstrated that ongoing relationship education and support services after marriage significantly improved couple functioning and reduced the risk of relationship breakdown. Therefore, premarital counseling

programs should establish comprehensive post-marriage support systems including regular check-ins, booster sessions, and crisis intervention services.

Another Mothers Union member mentioned that, *“we need to use real-life examples and case studies during counseling sessions because young people learn better when they see practical examples of both good and bad marriages.”* This implies that current premarital counseling approaches may be too theoretical and lack practical, relatable content that effectively communicates the realities of domestic violence and healthy relationships. The respondent’s suggestion indicates that experiential learning methods could enhance the impact and retention of counseling messages. This finding aligns with research by Gottman and Levenson (1992) who emphasized the importance of concrete, observable examples in teaching relationship skills and helping couples understand the consequences of different behavioral patterns. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should incorporate case study methodologies, role-playing exercises, and real-life testimonials to enhance learning effectiveness.

4.1.5 Responses from Fathers Union

During the interview with one of the Fathers Union members on improving premarital counseling effectiveness, he stated that, *“men need separate sessions where they can discuss their fears and concerns about marriage without feeling judged, because many of us struggle with anger management but are afraid to admit it.”* This implies that current premarital counseling programs may not adequately address male-specific issues and emotional vulnerabilities that can contribute to domestic violence. The respondent’s insight suggests that creating safe spaces for men to explore their emotions and behavioral patterns is crucial for prevention efforts. This agrees with the findings of Stosny (2005) who argued that addressing male emotional regulation and providing anger management skills in a non-threatening environment is essential for preventing intimate partner violence. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should include gender-specific sessions that allow men to address their emotional challenges and develop healthy coping strategies.

Another Fathers Union member mentioned that, *“we should teach young men about the legal consequences of domestic violence and how it affects their families and communities, because many don’t understand the seriousness of these actions.”* This implies that premarital counseling must include education about the legal, social, and psychological consequences of domestic

violence to serve as a deterrent and increase awareness. The respondent's observation suggests that knowledge about consequences may motivate behavioral change and promote accountability. This finding supports the work of Gondolf (2002) who found that educational interventions that clearly communicate the costs and consequences of domestic violence can be effective in prevention programs when combined with skill-building components. Therefore, premarital counseling curricula should incorporate comprehensive education about the multi-faceted impacts of domestic violence on perpetrators, victims, children, and communities.

4.1.6 Responses from Men's Fellowship

During the interview with one of the Men's Fellowship members on enhancing premarital counseling, he said that, "*we need to involve older, respected men in the community who have successful marriages as mentors because young men respect and listen to them more than formal counselors.*" This implies that current premarital counseling programs may lack culturally appropriate mentorship models that resonate with young men in the community. The respondent's suggestion indicates that peer-to-peer learning from successful role models could be more effective than formal counseling approaches. This agrees with the findings of Rhodes (2002) who demonstrated that mentorship programs utilizing respected community members as role models significantly improved outcomes in behavior change interventions among young adults. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should establish mentorship components that pair engaged couples with successful married couples who can provide ongoing guidance and support.

Another Men's Fellowship member stated that, "*premarital counseling should include practical skills like financial management and household responsibilities because many conflicts arise from these everyday issues that can escalate into violence.*" This implies that effective domestic violence prevention requires addressing the practical life skills that contribute to marital stress and conflict. The respondent's insight suggests that teaching couples how to manage common stressors can prevent the escalation of conflicts into violence. This finding supports the research by Conger *et al.* (1990) who found that economic stress and role confusion significantly increased the risk of domestic violence, and that teaching couples practical management skills reduced these risk factors. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should incorporate comprehensive life skills training including financial management, household organization, and stress management techniques.

4.1.7 Responses from the policy members

During the interview with one of the policy members on recommendations for enhancing premarital counseling effectiveness, he mentioned that, “we need to create policies that make premarital counseling mandatory for all couples seeking marriage licenses, and ensure that these programs meet specific quality standards.” This implies that voluntary participation in premarital counseling programs may be insufficient to achieve widespread domestic violence prevention, and that policy-level interventions are necessary to ensure comprehensive coverage. The respondent’s perspective suggests that systematic, mandated approaches could have greater population-level impact than voluntary programs. This agrees with the findings of Futris *et al.* (2011) who found that states with mandatory premarital education requirements showed significant reductions in divorce rates and domestic violence incidents compared to states without such requirements. Therefore, policy frameworks should be developed to institutionalize quality premarital counseling as a prerequisite for marriage registration while ensuring program standardization and effectiveness.

Another policy member stated that, “we need to establish partnerships between churches, government agencies, and civil society organizations to create comprehensive prevention programs that address domestic violence from multiple angles.” This implies that effective domestic violence prevention requires coordinated, multi-sectoral approaches that leverage the strengths of different institutions and organizations. The respondent’s recommendation suggests that isolated, single-organization efforts may be insufficient to address the complex factors contributing to domestic violence. This finding aligns with research by Krug *et al.* (2002) who emphasized that successful domestic violence prevention requires ecological approaches that address individual, relationship, community, and societal factors through coordinated interventions. Therefore, premarital counseling programs should be integrated into broader, multi-sectoral domestic violence prevention strategies that involve churches, government agencies, healthcare providers, and community organizations.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the theological reflection of the research findings on the assessment of the impact of premarital counseling programs in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese Bulindi Archdeaconry. It is presented as based on the objectives of study.

5.1 Theological Reflection on the role of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence in marriages

Premarital counseling, as practiced within the Christian context, plays a crucial role in shaping godly marriages by preparing couples to live harmoniously, reflecting Christ's love in their union. Scripture affirms the need for preparation before entering marriage. Proverbs 24:3-4 declares, *“By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.”* This passage underscores the value of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge qualities premarital counseling seeks to impart. In Bulindi Archdeaconry, these programs help couples understand the sanctity of marriage, effective communication, conflict resolution, and roles in marriage, which ultimately work against the roots of domestic violence.

Counseling sessions create a safe space where soon-to-be couples confront potential areas of conflict and learn to address them biblically. Ephesians 5:21-25 provides a theological foundation for mutual submission and sacrificial love in marriage. The scripture says, *“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church.”* Premarital counseling uses such verses to build marriages on mutual respect and love, contrary to violence and abuse. Thus, within the Bulindi Archdeaconry, premarital counseling is a spiritual and practical shield against the breakdown of family structures and the rise of domestic violence.

5.2 Theological Reflection of the challenges affecting the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence

Despite its importance, premarital counseling faces numerous challenges in Bulindi Archdeaconry. Cultural resistance to open dialogue about marital issues is a significant barrier. In the Old Testament, Hosea 4:6 laments, *“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.”* This ignorance, when coupled with cultural silence on matters of abuse, limits the reach and impact of counseling. Furthermore, limited training among church leaders and counselors hampers the delivery of effective sessions. Some church leaders may lack psychological or counseling skills, making the sessions too doctrinal without addressing real-life marital struggles.

Moreover, the influence of patriarchal structures often leads to male dominance being wrongly justified through scripture, contributing to domestic violence. However, Galatians 3:28 reminds us, *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* This verse promotes equality in Christ, which should form the foundation of marital relationships. Unfortunately, where premarital counseling fails to challenge harmful gender stereotypes, domestic violence persists. Therefore, the Church in Bulindi must re-evaluate its teaching approach and provide continuous training for counselors to make sessions holistic, addressing both spiritual and practical marital issues.

5.3 Theological Reflection on Recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence

To strengthen premarital counseling, the Church in Bulindi Archdeaconry should implement several theological and practical recommendations. First, it should ground counseling in biblical teachings on love, patience, forgiveness, and mutual respect. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 provides a clear model of love that protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Counselors should practically demonstrate how these attributes apply in resolving marital disagreements without resorting to violence.

Secondly, the Church should incorporate continuous training for counseling teams, ensuring they are equipped to deal with psychological, emotional, and spiritual issues. Regular workshops and seminars, inclusive of topics like gender equality, mental health, and conflict management, will

enhance counselor competency. Proverbs 15:22 reminds us, *“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed.”* This highlights the importance of collective wisdom and training in tackling societal challenges like domestic violence.

Lastly, premarital counseling should extend beyond the couple to include families and community leaders, creating a support system that holds individuals accountable. Community-wide sensitization using sermons, workshops, and family fellowships can further dismantle harmful cultural beliefs that perpetuate violence. By doing so, the Church lives out its mission in Isaiah 1:17, *“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.”* Thus, premarital counseling becomes both a spiritual and social ministry.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study found that premarital counseling plays a foundational role in building peaceful and loving marriages in Bulindi Archdeaconry. By teaching biblical principles of love, mutual respect, and conflict resolution, these programs address root causes of domestic violence. Theologically, marriage is designed to reflect the love relationship between Christ and the Church, as emphasized in Ephesians 5:25. When couples embrace these teachings during premarital counseling, they are better prepared to face marital challenges non-violently and in unity.

However, the study also revealed significant challenges hindering the effectiveness of premarital counseling. Cultural barriers, limited training for church leaders, and misinterpretations of Scripture remain key obstacles. These challenges create gaps where violence can thrive, despite the church’s efforts. This calls for the Church to revisit its counseling curriculum, offer continuous training for facilitators, and engage the entire Christian community in advocacy against domestic violence, reminding them of their calling as salt and light in the world (Matthew 5:13-14).

To enhance the impact of premarital counseling, it is recommended that the Church integrates both spiritual and psychosocial components in its counseling programs. This should be done through improved training, community sensitization, and the use of scripture to challenge harmful gender norms. Furthermore, partnerships with counseling professionals and community leaders can provide additional support to couples, thereby strengthening families and reducing domestic

violence. In doing so, the Church fulfills its divine mission of promoting peace and justice in families and society at large.

5.5 Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the diocese/ the church should consider the following in order to keep premarital counseling effective in combating domestic violence.

The researcher recommends that the church should involve skilled and certified counselors to handle sensitive topics during premarital counseling sessions. The quality and effectiveness of premarital counseling are closely tied to the qualifications of the individuals conducting it. In many communities, while clergy or lay leaders provide valuable spiritual guidance, they often lack the psychological training required to address complex relational issues such as abuse, trauma, and mental health challenges. To enhance the outcomes of premarital counseling, it is essential for the church to collaborate with trained professionals who can competently address all relevant topics. Furthermore, partnerships between church leaders and professionals—such as psychologists, therapists, and social workers—should be actively encouraged. With their expertise, these counselors are better equipped to facilitate difficult conversations, recognize unhealthy relationship

Secondly Churches should also prioritize organizing regular refresher courses for their leaders to ensure they are well-equipped with up-to-date knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary for delivering effective premarital counseling. These trainings can introduce contemporary issues affecting marriages, including emerging forms of domestic violence, mental health challenges, and evolving gender roles. By enhancing the competence of church leaders through ongoing education, the quality and relevance of counseling sessions will improve significantly. Furthermore, to ensure that the lessons imparted during premarital counseling are not forgotten or ignored, churches should establish a structured follow-up system. This may involve periodic check-ins with married couples, mentorship programs, or small group discussions to monitor progress, reinforce positive behaviors, and provide support where gaps or challenges are identified. Such continuous engagement not only strengthens marital relationships but also reinforces the church's role in promoting healthy, violence-free homes

In addition the researcher recommends that the diocese should establish mandatory and intentional premarital counseling programs addressing practical skills in conflict resolution, communication, anger management, and financial planning. These programs must include gender-specific components empowering women with rights knowledge while helping men develop positive masculinity and emotional intelligence.

Finally from the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that the diocese should collaborate with government agencies, civil society organizations, and healthcare providers to create a policy framework mandating quality-standardized premarital counseling as marriage registration prerequisite. These professional development programs must provide specialized training for church counselors in evidence-based assessment tools, domestic violence risk identification, and family systems approaches.

5.6 Areas for further study

Based on the findings of this research, several areas deserve further investigation to enhance domestic violence prevention strategies in Bulindi Archdeaconry, these include the following:
The role of cultural beliefs in influencing the effectiveness of premarital counseling in rural Christian communities.

A comparative study of premarital counseling outcomes in urban versus rural dioceses within the Church of Uganda.

The psychological preparedness of church leaders and lay counselors in addressing domestic violence beyond theological frameworks.

REFERENCES

- Abramsky, T., Watts, C. H., Garcia-Moreno, C., Devries, K., Kiss, L., Ellsberg, M., ... & Heise, L. (2011). What factors are associated with recent intimate partner violence? Findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *BMC Public Health*, 11(1), 109.
- ActionAid Uganda. (2020). *Economic violence in Ugandan households: Patterns and interventions*.
- Adams, A. E., Sullivan, C. M., Bybee, D., & Greeson, M. R. (2008). Development of the scale of economic abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 14(5), 563-588.
- Adler-Baeder, F., Kerpelman, J. L., Schramm, D. G., Higginbotham, B., & Paulk, A. (2007). The impact of relationship education on adolescents of diverse backgrounds. *Family Relations*, 56(3), 291-301.10.
- African Union. (2021). *Report on violence against women in Africa*.
- Akello, D. (2021). *The role of premarital counseling in mitigating domestic violence in Uganda*. Kampala: Makerere University Press.
- Akinade, E. A., et al. (2015). *Counseling for marriage and family living*. Lagos: Educational Publishers.
- Anglican Diocese of Bunyoro Kitara. (2022). Premarital counseling programs and their role in Christian marriages.
- Atuhura, R. (2023). Interviews with clergy and community leaders. Bulindi Archdeaconry.
- Bancroft, L., & Silverman, J. G. (2002). *The batterer as parent: Addressing the impact of domestic violence on family dynamics*. Sage Publications.
- Bhardwaj, A., & Srivastava, M. (2018). Cultural dynamics in premarital counseling. *Asian Journal of Family Studies*, 10(3), 45–61.9.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Jason Aronson.
- Bowman, C. (2003). *Violence against women in sub-Saharan Africa: Cultural and legal dimensions*.
- Braithwaite, S. R., & Fincham, F. D. (2014). Computer-based prevention of intimate partner violence in marriage. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 54, 12-21.
- Bulindi Archdeaconry Report. (2023). *Domestic violence trends and community interventions*.

- Bunyoro Diocesan Report. (2022). Annual assessment of premarital counseling programs. Hoima: Diocesan Press.
- Campbell, J. C., Webster, D., Koziol-McLain, J., Block, C., Campbell, D., Curry, M. A., ... & Laughon, K. (2003). Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: Results from a multisite case control study. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(7), 1089-1097.
- Coker, A. L., Fisher, B. S., Bush, H. M., Swan, S. C., Williams, C. M., Clear, E. R., & DeGue, S. (2015). Intimate partner violence incidence and continuation in a primary care screening program. *American Journal of Epidemiology, 181*(2), 107-117.
- Conger, R. D., Elder, G. H., Lorenz, F. O., Conger, K. J., Simons, R. L., Whitbeck, L. B., ... & Melby, J. N. (1990). Linking economic hardship to marital quality and instability. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 52*(3), 643-656.
- Diocesan Counseling Report. (2023). *Challenges in addressing emotional abuse in Bulindi Archdeaconry*.
- Dlamini, T. (2019). Addressing domestic violence through premarital counseling in South Africa. *Journal of African Family Studies, 15*(2), 125-140.
- East African Community Gender Policy. (2020). *Addressing gender-based violence in East Africa*.
- Fawcett, E. B., Hawkins, A. J., Blanchard, V. L., & Carroll, J. S. (2010). Do premarital education programs really work? A meta-analytic study. *Family Relations, 59*(3), 232-239.
- Follingstad, D. R., Rutledge, L. L., Berg, B. J., Hause, E. S., & Polek, D. S. (1990). The role of emotional abuse in physically abusive relationships. *Journal of Family Violence, 5*(2), 107-120.
- Futris, T. G., Adler-Baeder, F., & Dean, J. A. (2010). Implementing and evaluating marriage and relationship education programs with diverse populations. In *Sourcebook of marriage and family diversity* (pp. 265-282). Oxford University Press.
- Futris, T. G., Barton, A. W., Aholou, T. M., & Seponski, D. M. (2011). The impact of PREPARE on engaged couples: Variations by delivery format. *Family Relations, 60*(1), 28-42.
- García-Moreno, C., Jansen, H., Ellsberg, M., Heise, L., & Watts, C. (2013). *Global and regional estimates of violence against women*.
- Gondolf, E. W. (2002). *Batterer intervention systems: Issues, outcomes, and recommendations*. Sage Publications.

- Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (1992). Marital processes predictive of later dissolution: Behavior, physiology, and health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(2), 221-231.10.
- Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (2000). The timing of divorce: Predicting when a couple will divorce over a 14-year period. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(3), 737-745.
- Halford, K. W., Markman, H. J., & Stanley, S. M. (2010). Strengthening couple relationships for optimal prevention of domestic violence. *Family Relations*, 59(2), 111-121.10.
- Halford, W. K., Markman, H. J., Kline, G. H., & Stanley, S. M. (2003). Best practice in couple relationship education. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 29(3), 385-406.
- Hawkins, A. J., Blanchard, V. L., Baldwin, S. A., & Fawcett, E. B. (2008). Does marriage and relationship education work? A meta-analytic study. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 76(5), 723-732.
- Heise, L. L. (1998). Violence against women: An integrated, ecological framework. *Violence Against Women*, 4(3), 262-290.
- Heise, L. L. (1998). Violence against women: An integrated, ecological framework. *Violence Against Women*, 4(3), 262-290.
- Heise, L., & Kotsadam, A. (2015). Cross-national analysis of intimate partner violence. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jewkes, R. (2002). Intimate partner violence: Causes and prevention. *The Lancet*, 359(9315), 1423-1429.
- Johnson, M. P., & Ferraro, K. J. (2000). Research on domestic violence in the 1990s: Making distinctions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 948-961.10.
- Kagumire, R., & Atwoki, J. (2021). Religious integration in premarital counseling and its impact on marriage stability in Uganda. *East African Journal of Social Work*, 4(1), 87-101.
- Kahwa, J. (2023). *Financial challenges in Bulindi marriages*. Bulindi: Local Press.
- Katongole, P. (2023). Clergy insights on marriage counseling in Bunyoro Kitara. *Bulindi Archdeaconry Report*.
- Kimani, J. (2019). Patterns of domestic violence in Kenya: A regional study. Nairobi, Kenya: Oxford University Press.

- Koenig, M. A., Lutalo, T., Zhao, F., Nalugoda, F., Wabwire-Mangen, F., Kiwanuka, N., ... & Gray, R. (2003). Domestic violence in rural Uganda: Evidence from a community-based study. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 81(1), 53-60.
- Krug, E. G., Mercy, J. A., Dahlberg, L. L., & Zwi, A. B. (2002). The world report on violence and health. *The Lancet*, 360(9339), 1083-1088.
- Larson, J. H., & Holman, T. B. (2017). *Premarital predictors of marital quality and stability*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Local Community Study. (2023). *Economic and gender-based challenges in Bulindi Archdeaconry*.
- Makusha, T., et al. (2020). Premarital counseling in South Africa. *African Journal of Psychology*, 15(2), 67–78. Pretoria, South Africa: University of Pretoria Press.
- Markman, H. J., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., Ragan, E. P., & Whitton, S. W. (2010). The premarital communication roots of marital distress and divorce: The first five years of marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(3), 289-298.
- Markman, H. J., Stanley, S. M., & Blumberg, S. L. (2010). *Fighting for your marriage: A deluxe revised edition of the classic best-seller for enhancing marriage and preventing divorce*. Jossey-Bass.
- Markman, H. J., Stanley, S. M., & Blumberg, S. L. (2013). *Fighting for your marriage: A deluxe revised edition of the classic best-seller for enhancing marriage and preventing divorce*. Jossey-Bass.
- Mbilinyi, P., et al. (2019). Evaluating premarital counseling impact on Tanzanian marriages. *Tanzania Social Research Review*, 10(1), 15-30.
- Mbuthia, J., & Waithaka, E. (2020). The role of premarital counseling in reducing domestic violence in Kenya. *African Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 8(3), 220-235.
- Moore, A. M., Frohwirth, L., & Miller, E. (2010). Male reproductive control of women who have experienced intimate partner violence in the United States. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70(11), 1737-1742.
- Muema, C., & Githinji, A. (2018). Gender-sensitive premarital counseling in Kenya. *Nairobi Counseling Journal*, 5(3), 89–105.
- Muhirwa, G., et al. (2020). Role-playing in premarital counseling. *Journal of Counseling in East Africa*, 12(1), 29–40.

- Musana, F., *et al.* (2020). Faith-based approaches in premarital counseling. *Uganda Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4), 123–140.
- Mushi, R., *et al.* (2021). Financial management in premarital counseling. *Tanzania Social Work Journal*, 8(2), 34–56.
- Namara, E., *et al.* (2020). Premarital counseling and domestic violence prevention in Uganda. *Uganda Journal of Family Studies*, 5(2), 144-159.
- Obua, G. (2019). Addressing family dynamics in premarital counseling in Uganda. *Journal of Christian Marriage and Family*, 12(4), 56-71.9.
- Okon, E. (2018). Premarital counseling as a tool for reducing domestic violence in Nigeria. *West African Journal of Counseling*, 6(2), 78-91.9.
- Olson, D. H., & Larson, P. J. (2008). *PREPARE/ENRICH: Customized version*. Life Innovations.
- Oluwole, S. (2020). Economic aspects of premarital counseling and marital stability in Africa. *African Economic Journal*, 14(3), 200-215.
- Ooms, T., & Wilson, B. (2014). Enhancing relationships through premarital counseling. *Journal of Family Relations*, 63(2), 101–120.
- Peacock, D., & Barker, G. (2014). Working with men and boys to prevent gender-based violence: Principles, lessons learned, and ways forward. *Men and Masculinities*, 17(5), 578-599.
- Rhoades, G. K., & Stanley, S. M. (2009). Relationship education for individuals: The benefits and challenges of intervening early. In *What works in relationship education?* (pp. 44-54). National Healthy Marriage Resource Center.
- Rhodes, J. E. (2002). *Stand by me: The risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth*. Harvard University Press.
- Speizer, I. S. (2010). Intimate partner violence attitudes and experience among women and men in Uganda. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(7), 1224-1241.
- Stanley, S. M., Amato, P. R., Johnson, C. A., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Premarital education, marital quality, and marital stability: Findings from a large, random household survey. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20(1), 117-126.
- Stanley, S. M., Amato, P. R., Johnson, C. A., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Premarital education, marital quality, and marital stability: Findings from a large, random household survey. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20(1), 117-126.

- Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., & Blumberg, S. (2006). The long-term benefits of premarital counseling. *Journal of Family Psychology, 20*(2), 217-225.
- Stanley, S. M., Rhoades, G. K., Loew, B. A., Allen, E. S., Carter, S., Osborne, L. J., ... & Markman, H. J. (2014). A randomized controlled trial of relationship education in the U.S. Army: 2-year outcomes. *Family Relations, 63*(4), 482-495.
- Stark, E. (2007). *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*. Oxford University Press.
- Stark, E., & Hester, M. (2019). Coercive control: Update and review. *Violence Against Women, 25*(1), 81-102.
- Stosny, S. (2005). *You don't have to take it anymore: Turn your resentful, angry, or emotionally abusive relationship into a compassionate, loving one*. Free Press.
- Tamale, S. (2020). *Decolonization and Afro-feminism*. Daraja Press.
- Tumwine, G., et al. (2022). Accessibility of premarital counseling in rural Uganda. *Journal of Marriage and Family Studies, 9*(3), 77-95.
- Tumwine, J. (2023). Community perspectives on counseling in Bulindi Archdeaconry. *Local Church Bulletin, 3*(2), 10-11.9.
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). (2021). *Gender-based violence report in Uganda*.
- Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS). (2016). *Violence against women statistics in Uganda*.
- Wainaina, P. (2019). Community-based premarital programs. *Kenya Social Studies Journal, 7*(1), 12-21.10.
- Wathen, C. N., MacGregor, J. C. D., & MacQuarrie, B. J. (2020). *Economic abuse as a form of domestic violence*.
- Watts, C., & Zimmerman, C. (2002). Violence against women: Global scope and magnitude. *The Lancet, 359*(9313), 1232-1237.
- WHO. (2021). *Premarital counseling: Global strategies for marital stability*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Williamson, H. C., Altman, N., Hsueh, J., & Bradbury, T. N. (2016). Effects of relationship education on couple communication and satisfaction: A randomized controlled trial with low-income couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 84*(2), 156-166.

World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). *Violence against women prevalence estimate*

APPENDICES

Research Questionnaire for Couples

Dear Respondent,

I am Atuhuura Edward, a final year student of Uganda Christian University, Mukono, pursuing a Master of Divinity. I am currently carrying out a Research entitled “the role of premarital counseling in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese Bulindi Archdeaconry” You have been selected to participate in this research exercise and any information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It will be used for academic purposes only. Thank you very much for cooperation.

Questions.

1. Did you get any premarital counselling?

Yes No

2. Has pre-marital counseling played any role in your marriage life?

.....
.....

1.10. What impacts does pre-marital counseling cause in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bulindi Archdeaconry?

(1) -----

(2)
.....
.....

(3)
.....
.....

(4)
.....
.....

2. Have you ever observed any form of domestic violence in Bulindi?

Yes

No

5.If yes, what are they?

(1)

.....
.....

(2)

.....
.....

(3)

.....
.....

(4)

.....
.....

(5)

6.What could have caused the domestic violence listed in (2) above?

(1)

(2)

.....
.....

(3)

.....
.....

(4)

.....
.....

7. Can what you learnt in premarital counseling help you to fight domestic violence mentioned in (2) above?

Yes

No

8. What should be done to enhance the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence?

(1) -----

(2)
.....
.....

(3)
.....
.....

(4)

Thank you very much for your responses. May God bless you.

Appendix II: Interview Guide for Key informants (Church leaders, Community elders and Local government leaders)

Dear Respondent,

I am Atuhuura Edward, a final year student of Uganda Christian University, Mukono, pursuing a Master of Divinity. I am currently carrying out a Research entitled “the role of premarital counseling in combating domestic violence in marriages within Bunyoro Kitara Diocese Bulindi Archdeaconry” You have been selected to participate in this research exercise and any information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It will be used for academic purposes only. Thank you very much for cooperation.

Questions (Kindly respond)

4. What role do you play in this Church or community?
5. Have you encountered cases of domestic violence among your community couples?
6. If yes, what forms of domestic violence are experienced by the couples in your Church/ community?
7. Do you offer pre-marital counselling program/ classes to the intending couples to join marriage?
8. If yes, where are these pre-marital counselling sessions held?
9. Has this program had any impact in couples’ marriages? (especially in overcoming domestic violence in their marriages)
10. Kindly state how pre-marital counselling impacts marriages in as far as solving domestic violence is concerned.
11. From your experience of pre-marital counseling, what recommendations can you suggest for enhancing the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs in preventing domestic violence?

Thank you very much for your responses. May God bless you



A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION

This letter serves to introduce to you of Bishop Tucker School of Divinity pursuing a

Atuhwira Edward Gerald

001

- ✓ Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts in Theology
- Master of Arts in Theology and Development
- Master of Arts in Theology and Health Care Management
- Bachelor of Divinity

The Candidate is carrying out a research as a partial requirement for the award of the degree mentioned above. So kindly avail required information to the bearer of this letter.

Counting on your cooperation and thank you in advance

Yours faithfully

Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Mukeshimana
Research coordinator, Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology.
emukeshimana@lucw.ac.ug, 0772505474

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa





15% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.




Filtered from the Report

- Bibliography
- Quoted Text

Match Groups

-  **15 Not Cited or Quoted 12%**
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
-  **46 Missing Quotations 3%**
Matches that are still very similar to source material
-  **0 Missing Citation 0%**
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
-  **0 Cited and Quoted 0%**
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

- 12%  Internet sources
- 10%  Publications
- 5%  Submitted works (Student Papers)

Integrity Flags

0 Integrity Flags for Review

No suspicious text manipulations found.

Our system's algorithms look deeply at a document for any inconsistencies that would set it apart from a normal submission. If we notice something strange, we flag it for you to review.

A flag is not necessarily an indicator of a problem. However, we'd recommend you focus your attention there for further review.

Match Groups

- **15 Not Cited or Quoted 12%**
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
- **46 Missing Quotations 3%**
Matches that are still very similar to source material
- **0 Missing Citation 0%**
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
- **0 Cited and Quoted 0%**
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

- 12% Internet sources
- 10% Publications
- 5% Submitted works (Student Papers)

Top Sources

The sources with the highest number of matches within the submission. Overlapping sources will not be displayed.

1	Internet	dspace.mak.ac.ug	1%
2	Internet	www.coursehero.com	<1%
3	Internet	lrbackend.klu.ac.ug	<1%
4	Internet	platformforthe needy.org	<1%
5	Student papers	Uganda Christian University	<1%
6	Internet	lr.klu.ac.ug	<1%
7	Internet	hdl.handle.net	<1%
8	Internet	www.arcworld.org	<1%
9	Internet	ebin.pub	<1%
10	Internet	backend.kab.ac.ug	<1%