

## Leadership and Administrative Actions on Violence Practices against Children in Tanzania: The Case of Kisarawe District

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.4.166>

### ABSTRACT

*The present paper examines leadership and administrative actions undertaken to address violence practices against children in Kisarawe District. It offers people's awareness on the laws and regulations used to protect children against violence. It also identifies various challenges facing leaders and administrators toward the prevention of violence against children. This paper was guided by transactional leadership theory. The study adopted qualitative approach and it has used a case study design. The target population was 159,226 out of which 46 respondents were purposely selected by virtue of their experiences. Interview, focus group discussions, and observations were used as tools for data collection. The analysis of data was done through content analysis. The findings revealed that leaders and administrators have been successfully taking action to end Violence against Children (VAC) and most of the people are aware of it. Moreover, different stakeholders have been involved in adding efforts towards the government initiatives to end VAC. Conclusively, effective leadership and administrative actions have positive impacts towards protection of VAC incidents. It is recommended that efforts should be made to add more resources like police stations and transportation equipment to simplify the accessibility of remote areas. It is also recommended that further studies may focus on addressing the influence of culture on VAC.*

**Keywords:** Administrative Actions, Leadership, Violence against Children

### I. INTRODUCTION

Violence against Children (VAC) is a global issue that requires effective leadership and administrative actions. Various countries have implemented different strategies to fight VAC, reflecting diverse cultural, social, and political contexts (Jones *et al.*, 2012). In many nations, leadership initiatives have focused on strengthening legal frameworks to protect children. This includes the enactment of laws that criminalize all forms of violence against children, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse (World Health Organization, 2020). Countries such as Sweden and Norway pioneered the establishment of comprehensive child protection laws, setting a benchmark for other nations. These laws are often accompanied by policies that mandate reporting and provide protection for whistleblowers, ensuring that cases of abuse are promptly addressed (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2021).

Some countries have transferred their trained law enforcement and social service providers into working for child protection. In Tanzania for example, Nguyen *et al.* (2021) state that efforts to tackle child abuse have been made through the establishment of Child Protection Teams (CPTs) at the district level consisting of police officers, social workers, healthcare providers, and local leaders. These teams ensure that the victims are provided with the necessary care and assistance as well as ensuring that cases are handled efficiently (Devries *et al.*, 2017). The government of Tanzania, particularly through royalty and NGOs including UNICEF, has embarked on a campaign to promote awareness of children's rights as well as the vices of violence (Hillis *et al.*, 2016). These campaigns take various forms of media such as radio and TV, and are aired during community outreach programs to reach many people in a bid to change society's attitude towards the protection of children (UNICEF, 2021).

The independent variable is based on leadership and administrative actions while violence against children (VAC) serve as dependent variable. The interpretation here is that when there is weak leadership and administrative actions, the violence against children are likely to increase and the vice-versa.

#### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The surveyed studies (cf. Mutasa 2021; Brown & Nwagbara 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2018; Smith *et al.*, 2017; Jones *et al.*, 2012) have successfully addressed various issues related to sexual violence against children, relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, challenges facing local administrators in

implementing child protection policies, and effective leadership strategies in promoting awareness of child protection laws in developing countries. Regardless of their respectable works, none of the reviewed literatures have conducted a comprehensive study about leadership and administrative actions on VAC in Kisarawe, Tanzania. The current situation indicates that Tanzanian government has dedicated efforts and strategies to end child violence, and the initiatives have largely proven unsuccessful and inadequate. VAC has become a growing issue affecting a substantial number of children across various regions of Tanzania (UNICEF, 2021). It is extensively felt that a study on leadership and administrative actions on VAC is one of the most overlooked areas. As a result, this paper aims to cover the unstudied part for the purpose of addressing the problem at hand.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The present paper intended to achieve the following objectives:

- i) To identify forms of violence and determine the leadership administrative actions that have been fruitfully used to address violence practices against children in Kisarawe District;
- ii) To measure the effectiveness of leadership actions used in raising awareness about the protection of children against violence practices in Kisarawe District;
- iii) To address various challenges facing leaders and administrators in ending VAC in Kisarawe District.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

This part provides a comprehensive examination of existing frameworks, concepts, and theoretical perspectives relevant to leadership, administrative actions, and violence against children. It synthesizes scholarly discussions on effective leadership strategies, administrative theories in public governance, and theoretical insights into the dynamics of child violence.

#### 2.1.1 Transactional Leadership Theory

This paper made reference to the transformational and transactional leadership theories. Transformational leadership was firstly coined by James V. Downton in 1973. The theory was further clarified by James Burns in 1978. The theory centers on the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve higher levels of performance and moral development (Northouse, 2020). At its core, transformational leadership encourages followers to transcend their self-interests for the collective good, fostering a sense of shared vision and mission. Research on transformational leadership has shown positive effects on organizational outcomes (Piccolo & Colquitt 2006). However, transformational leadership theory is criticized for its potential to overlook transactional aspects of leadership (Layek & Koodamara, 2024).

Transactional Leadership Theory emphasizes the exchange relationship between leaders and followers based on rewards, punishments, and contingent transactions (Northouse, 2020). Unlike transformational leadership, transactional leadership operates on a more transactional basis of contingent reinforcement. Transactional leaders focus on maintaining order and efficiency within organizations through the effective use of rewards and punishments (Northouse, 2020). Transactional leadership theory is criticized by its narrow focus on task-oriented behaviors and short-term performance outcomes, potentially overlooking long-term organizational development and innovation (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). Moreover, the emphasis on transactional exchanges may undermine intrinsic motivation and creativity among followers, limiting their engagement and commitment to organizational goals (Layek & Koodamara, 2024). In spite of these criticisms, transactional leadership remains relevant in the contexts where clear expectations, structure, and accountability are essential features for achieving organizational objectives.

### 2.2 Empirical Review

This part provides knowledge based on the outlined research objectives. For instance, Mutasa (2021) made an investigation on strategies for preventing and responding to sexual violence against children. Using Systems Theory, they interviewed district administrators and NGO representatives to examine collaborative efforts aimed at combating child abuse. The findings underscored the importance of coordinated actions between government agencies and non-profit organizations, including the establishment of child protection units and regular monitoring protocols for at-risk children. The study concluded that a systemic approach involving multiple stakeholders is essential for effectively addressing and preventing child abuse in rural Tanzania, recommending enhanced coordination and increased resources for sustainable child protection initiatives.

Smith *et al.*, (2017) conducted a study on effective leadership strategies in promoting awareness of child protection laws in developing countries. The study revealed that leaders who effectively communicated child protection laws and engaged with local communities saw significant improvements in awareness and compliance with regulations. They concluded that effective leadership is crucial for disseminating information and fostering adherence

to child protection laws, recommending targeted training programs for leaders on communication strategies and increasing community outreach efforts to enhance child protection awareness.

Brown and Nwagbara (2021) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership in the era of Covid-19 pandemic challenges. They surveyed community leaders, examining the effectiveness of transactional and transformational leadership styles. The findings indicated that transformational leaders were more successful in raising awareness and encouraging community engagement towards child protection laws compared to transactional leaders. Brown and Nwagbara (2021) concluded that leadership style significantly affects the efficacy of child protection awareness campaigns, recommending the promotion of transformational leadership qualities in child protection leadership roles and continuous leadership training to optimize awareness and compliance with child protection laws.

Wang *et al.* (2018) examined challenges faced by Local Administrators in implementing child protection policies. Using implementation science as a theoretical framework, Wang interviewed local administrators in Tanzania to gather their perspectives and experiences. The study identified several barriers including inadequate resources, lack of training opportunities for administrators, and bureaucratic complexities. Wang concluded that addressing these systemic challenges is essential for the successful implementation of child protection policies, recommending improvements in resource allocation, enhanced training programs, and streamlined bureaucratic processes to facilitate better policy implementation and child protection outcomes. Nonetheless, the question of leadership and administrative actions on violence against children has remained unanswered.

Similarly, Jones *et al.* (2012) analysed barriers faced by leaders in addressing child abuse across different regions. Employing Comparative Analysis as a methodological approach, Jones surveyed and interviewed leaders from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to understand common challenges and regional variations. The study identified cultural stigma, insufficient community engagement, and inadequate funding as pervasive barriers affecting leadership efforts in child abuse prevention. However, leadership and administrative actions on violence against children remain uncovered. This situation unquestionably attracted the attention of the researcher to come out with this work.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Study Area

This study was conducted at Kisarawe District of Coastal region in Tanzania. Kisarawe is one of 8 districts in Coast Region. The choice of the study area was motivated by the researchers' familiarity. This helped researchers to access the remote areas where most of children are affected by the geographical remoteness of their homes to access services and justice bodies like the court and police stations.

#### 3.2 Research Design

This study employed qualitative approach. Qualitative studies prioritize subjective experiences of participants. It uncovers underlying patterns, themes, and relationships that contribute to a deeper understanding of the research topic. The researcher used Kisarawe district as a case study to represent other districts in Tanzania. A case study design is commonly used in qualitative research to explore in-depth information.

#### 3.3 Target Population and Sample Size

The sample size of 46 respondents out of 159,226 was selected purposively to achieve theoretical saturation, ensuring that the study captured a comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences related to the phenomenon under investigation. District leaders, social workers and community activist were deliberately selected by virtue of their experiences about the phenomenon under study. Interview, focus group discussions and observations were used for data collection.

#### 3.4 Data Analysis

Sound recorder was also used to collect voices after respondents' consent. These qualitative data were subsequently analyzed using content analysis, a systematic approach to categorize and interpret textual or visual data into meaningful themes and patterns

### IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Findings

##### 4.1.1 Forms of Violence

The study sought to find out how VAC in the district is manifested. The social welfare officers observed that most of the practiced acts of violence in Kisarawe District are sexual abuse and neglect. In a very minimal occurrence,

physical abuse is being practiced. The neglect appear as follows: some of the children are a denied rights to basic needs such as food, clothing and opportunity to go to school. Students have been also missing lunch despite of the leaders' initiatives that food should be provided in schools to facilitate learning. Some of the children are engaged in animal grazing and other agricultural activities denying them their right to go to school (SWO1: 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2023). An aged woman interviewed who has been raising two grandchildren with difficulties since their mother abandoned them. She had gone to Dar es Salaam (the commercial capital of Tanzania) to find a job. The old woman had this to say:

*"It has never been easy for me in this age to take care of my grandchildren but I have no choice because they are my daughter's children and their mother was abandoned by her husband. She had also to leave the children with me and she went to Dar es Salaam to look for a job. I do agricultural activities to get food for them. I thank the government for providing free education. Otherwise, it would have been more difficult to take care of these children."* (24<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)

#### 4.1.2 The Leadership and Administrative Actions

Assessing the leadership and administrative actions taken so far towards ending acts of violence against children was the first objective of this study. Interviews with the Social Welfare Officer, Ward Executive Officers, and Ward Education Officers of the Local Government Authority was to determining different strategies used by leaders and administrators to end children violence.

Ensuring the MTAKUWWA – which is a national plan of action against women and child violence developed in 2017/2018; it is implemented with a national level, regional, district and ward levels committees. Ward executive officers have been chairing these committees at their wards as one of the Social Welfare had this to say:

*"I have been reminding about the activeness of MTAKUWWA committees to the ward's executive officers through meetings and follow ups to ensure that during the village general meetings they remind parents and guardians about protecting their children. Also, they are being reminded of making sure that such acts are reported to ensure that justice is being served."* (SWO1: 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2023)

Secondly, the respondents from the social welfare office said that they have been assisting claimants to take legal action for some of them are not aware of the necessary procedures to get to the court.

*"We have been assisting victims in the legal procedures to obtain justice. Many have been coming back to request for assistance when they think there is a blockage somewhere and we have been able to provide such assistance."* (SWO2: 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023)

In addition, the social welfare officer reports such cases to the District Executive Director as well as to the District Commissioner's Office for follow up and to provide assistance in case of any difficulties in the process.

*"I make reports of such cases to the top district leaders so that they may know how to intervene into making sure that justice is being served."* (SWO1: 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2023)

Moreover, the respondent explained how they have been cooperating with other stakeholders, specifically NGO's stating that:

*"We work with different NGO's who have been doing different awareness programmes in our areas. Currently, we have three NGO's working in our district that is THPS (Tanzania Health Promotion Services), PASADA and Plan International. With limited resources in our district (i.e., motor vehicles), these NGO's have reached many people in different areas."* (SWO1: 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2023)

The police in Tanzania are required to have VAC and gender desks. The officers in charge were also interviewed. The police have been creating awareness through schools and village meetings. They educate the public on child's self-protection, parents' roles including close follow ups on them every time. One of the interviewed police officers responded that:

*"We have been creating awareness in schools and village meetings. Nowadays, most children know their rights and they can protect themselves against being abused. However, on the part of sexual abuse it has been a problem into winning cases at the court since some parents get into agreement with the accused at home to end the case. It has been also hard to file evidences as a result of delayed reporting to authorities and getting children to take bath before being checked by the health practitioners."* (Police Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)

An interview with one of the leaders at Homboza in Msimbu ward revealed that village authorities have been taking action immediately over the reported cases. For instance, taking the accused to police station and the child to the hospital immediately. Despite the fact that they have limited resources but in collaboration with parents they are being able to facilitate it. A respondent had this to say:

*"We have been using local security guards in arresting the accused and taking them to the police station. We also ensure that the victim is taken to the hospital for health examination. Another thing that we do is encouraging parents to provide food for their children while they are at school."* (Ward Executive Officer -6<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)

Early pregnancies are also a problem may be due to abuse or teenage sex. A head teacher of one school in Kisarawe ward gave an example of a standard 7 students who was impregnated as a result she was unable to do her final exams. The pregnancy was discovered when it was 7 months old and according to school regulations, students are not allowed to proceed with school until they give birth.

*“We have a student who cannot do her exams because of being pregnant. I am afraid that she will be missing her final standard seven exams but after giving birth, she may return to finish her studies thanks to the new policy of Excellency Samia our President. We have been counselling her to confirm that she goes back to school.”* (Head Teacher 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2023)

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed the head teacher from Chang’ombe B village at Kibuta. Parents of that area had organised their children to get food at their school. The teacher said:

*“We organised parents of this area to ensure that their children get food while at school. So, they gave cows and they chose one person among them to supervise and make sure that students get milk at school. Currently, the school has 15 cows. This is organised through a cooperation called UWaWa which brings together the efforts of teachers and parents into parenting when children are at school.”* (Head Teacher 2<sup>nd</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)

UWaWa is a cooperation of parents and teachers by representation of a teacher of a certain class with parents who are having children in the same class with an aim of planning, discussing, implementation and motivating activities that enhances students learning environment. It was established during 2023 by the Government of the URT under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology which provided a guideline on the cooperation activities between parents and teachers in primary schools.

The researcher interviewed one of the head teachers in private schools at Msimbu area regarding the leaders’ initiatives towards ending violence against children. Awareness has been clearly made and certain regulations have been put in place to ensure that guidance on children protection is being followed.

The respondent was asked if she is aware of the regulations that calls for the owners of the schools to have a female conductor in a school bus so as to get rid of the sexual violence towards children while they are on transit, the respondent replied as follows:

*“I am aware that the government has ordered the owners of private schools to have a female conductor and my school adheres to it except for one school bus which is having a male conductor. This male conductor is a relative of the school owner and the owner trusts him. Since he had no employment, he was given this chance to gain something to run his life. He has been working here for over a year now and there has never been such incidents nor complaints from the parents.”* (Head teacher 2<sup>nd</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2023)

A leader from Kibuta area responded that:

*“Following our leaders, we have been instructed to ensure that every child whose age is supposed to be at school next year is being registered to start primary school education in January 2024. So far (during November 2023) in collaboration with parents, the Ward Executive Officer and the Ward Security committee have succeeded to register 95% of all the children in our ward to start schooling.”* (Councilor 1<sup>st</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2023)

One form three secondary school girl child was interviewed to find her understanding of issues of violence. She was asked what she thinks of VAC and to check whether the children are aware of it and she stated that:

*“I am aware of VAC and according to the law of our country the one who violates a child’s right may be jailed if proven for such acts. The problem is that most of young girls of my age engage themselves with intimate relationships and ending up with failing to reach their dreams.”* (Female Student – 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2023)

The District Council is mandated to making sure that stakeholders are responsibly engaged against VAC in the district. One of the leaders stated that:

*“We have been encouraging NGO’s and WEO’s to visit remote areas for creation of awareness. Such NGOs give feedback in their quarterly reports. We normally incorporate our budgets to ensure that all areas are reached. We have also been using the government resources to reach other areas which are not reached.”* (The NGO’s Coordination Officer – 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2023)

One of the leaders of the District Council’s meeting was observed in a meeting giving the following instructions:

*“WEO’s must ensure that all children who are of schooling age are registered to start school. You should also work on controlling absenteeism including making sure that they get food while they are at school.”* (District Commissioner – 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2023)

In public meetings in the district, it is was observed that leaders proactively engage the public in VAC issues. It was also observed that the top administrative leader of the district – the district commissioner – has been addressing the issue of violence against children several times during meetings with local leaders as well as to the citizens when

paying a visit. To the local leaders she has been encouraging them to follow up on children's development at school, to make sure that they get food when they are at school and also to make sure that they do not miss school. The top leader of the district gave warning to the parents who use children as labour instead of taking them to school. She officially stated this during her meeting with the livestock keepers/pastoralists as follows:

*"I do not want to hear that children are used to direct animals at the schooling age, find others to do that job. If anyone does so, strong actions will be taken against him or her. I instruct WEO's to make sure that you administer this."* (District Commissioner – 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2023).

Following reports she gets from the social welfare officer, it was observed, the District Commissioner makes follow up on the cases to make sure that they are taken to court immediately after investigation.

#### 4.1.3 Effectiveness of the Leadership Administrative Actions against VAC

The study involved a focus group discussion aiming to acquire information on people's awareness, their attitude and VAC's prevalence. The activity was done in three villages i.e. Gwata (with a group of pastoralists), Homboza (with a group of those doing business) and Kifuru (with a group of heads of families). Starting with the Gwata village in Mafizi ward, the group involved 8 respondents i.e., 5 females and 3 men. Their responses were as follows:

R1 stated that: *"In our village there is VAC and I can refer to one of the incidents where young girls were sexually abused but the local leaders, guardians and parents did not care at all and when they reported it. Men accused who were bodaboda (passenger transport motorcycles) drivers ran away after getting news. I advise that the authorities should take action over the village and ward leaders who did not take action over men living with young girls of school age."*

R2 stated that: *"VAC is a problem but we thank the government for bringing closer the important social services such as police stations, schools and health centres. This helps to reduce such acts as immediately they can be reported to the police stations considering that our village is too far from the district headquarters."*

R3 responded that: *"I have never experienced it but I once heard that it happened to my neighbor whose daughter was raped but the case was taken to the police station."*

R4 stated that: *"Some of our fellow pastoralists have not taken their children to school because of taking care of animals. The district leaders have already instructed that we should make sure that our children go to school. Currently, all of our children are going to school, thanks to our leaders' instruction."*

Moreover, a second focus group discussion involved small business men and women at Homboza village in Msimbu ward. There were 8 respondents i.e., 6 women and 2 men. Their response was as follows:

R1 stated that: *"We face a problem of VAC in our village as it happened to my child of 9 years. She has been sexually abused and the case was presented before the court. Unfortunately, the accused was freed. I doubt that we failed the case since it was quite obvious the child was raped. I feel like there is something to do with bribes at the police station from the beginning of the case as well as in the court. We had the evidence such as PF3 (Police form that records harm reported and the doctor's report but I wonder why we failed."*

R2 stated that: *"We have been receiving non-governmental organisations coming to speak with us bringing about awareness on issues of VAC, we thank our government for allowing us to get this awareness."*

R3 stated that: *"VAC is there in our village; I remember being abused by my own mother when I was a young girl as I was beaten beyond the normal. I wonder if she even understood what she was doing. With this experience, I advise the government to put more efforts on educating people about VAC to eliminate violence."*

R4 stated that: *"Nowadays, many people are aware of VAC due to technological advancements. Social media helps in spreading awareness to people. In open gatherings, our leaders normally say about protecting our children from VAC. The government should invest in updating necessary legal instruments to pin down those practicing VAC."*

R5 stated that: *"We are aware but I think there is a problem with our children since some of them do not say when such acts happen. This has been due to blackmail and some of the suspects are closest family members. Parents may discover this when it is already late and it is hard to fetch evidences to move on with legal procedures. The government should invest in creating awareness to children for them to be able to handle them."*

Furthermore, a third focus group discussion involved head of families at Kifuru village in Kazimzumbwi ward. There were 8 respondents i.e., 7 women and 1 man. Their response was as follows:

R1 stated that: *"In our village, there is VAC as it is currently happening to myself that my neighbor has been living with my child for some time and he has been threatening me. I decided to take this case to the*

*police station so that he gets locked up and taken to court for such action. My child is comfortably living with this man and she does not want to come back home.”*

R2 stated that: *“I am aware of VAC and it is somehow related to personal beliefs, if someone can intentionally harm a child (whether his/her own or a neighbor’s child) without and sympathy nor fear, there must be something in that person’s mind. I advise that religious leaders should be in the front line in addressing such issues to strengthen religious beliefs.”*

R3 stated that: *“VAC has become a very big problem that we are not only talking about protecting girl children alone as it was before.”*

#### 4.1.4 Challenges Faced Leaders and Administrators in Ending VAC

The researcher interviewed some respondents to find out the challenges they face in the war against violence to children. To get the answers to this, the researcher interviewed officers from the District Social Welfare Office and the Officer from the Police Gender desk and they replied that:

*“There have been efforts to ensure people’s awareness as well as following up of cases to make sure that they are being taken to court. We are facing trouble because the accused are set free. Most of the cases as I tried to find out, it is said that the witnesses have failed to provide evidence. Some parents decide to compromise with the accused at home and the witness do not show up to the court. Some parents hide the truth as a result of protecting the family’s reputation since some of the wrong doers are family members. Some parents decide not to proceed with such cases due to cultural aspects.”* (SWO2: 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023)

Additionally, the respondent mentioned the challenge of remoteness of some areas as well as single parenting and divorce being a problem. One had this to say:

*“Some children lack the parenting of both father and mother due to divorce. Certain parents have left their children with their grandparents who somehow fail to take care of them. Also, our area is so scattered with few resources and it becomes difficult to all. We are able to divide the available resources to reach them in cooperation with stakeholders.”* (SWO2: 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023)

The officer from the gender and children desk stated that:

*“Most of the cases fail due to failure of presenting evidence and witnesses. Most of the children subjected to sexual violence are not taken to the hospital where the evidence may be easily revealed and filed. We have very few cases of physical violence. We have been making efforts to ensure that people understand what to do immediately after finding out what happened to their children.”* (Police Officer 06<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)

Moreover, as the researcher interviewed one of the political leaders who stated on the challenges they face from the parents as due to lack of willingness to protect their children as a result of protecting family reputation and neighborhood. This is more related to cultural aspects over a respect for men in a family or society. The following was said:

*“To end VAC there should be a joined effort among key stakeholders. There should be no one to hold back. For instance, to some of the families as a result of their culture it is a good manner to accuse man for such acts as it brings shame.”* (Councilor 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2023)

*“Most cases flop due to failure of presenting evidence and witnesses. Most children are subjected to sexual violence. We have been making efforts to ensure that people understand what to do immediately after finding out what happened to children.”* (Police Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2023)

One of the leaders from Kiluvya ward responded that:

*“The main challenge is that some cases are reported very late that becomes impossible to fetch evidences. In some cases, the accused are framed because of misunderstanding that may occur between parents/ relatives for revenge. However, some children engage themselves in relationships that in the end may physically and sexually harm them.”* (Councilor 3<sup>rd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2023)

Moreover, the political leaders pointed the lack of willingness to face challenges coming out of public knowledge following sexual violence incidents, including the protection of family reputation among neighbors. This is more related to cultural aspects over a respect for men in a family or society.

#### 4.2 Discussion of the Findings

The interviewed respondents have indicated that most of the children in the district are denied to get simple basic needs by their caregivers whereby they also fail to eat or feed on proper meals as they are busy in the fields working instead of being in school. Caregivers face difficulty in fulfilling children's needs or even the responsibility that comes with parenting, especially in rural areas where due to poverty they may lack the necessary resources in providing proper care. These findings resonate with what has been postulated in the literature concerning other types of violence against children where neglect as well as sexual abuse have been identified as significant problems

throughout the globe. For example, a UNICEF (2023) study of child abuse reveals neglect as one of the major categories that interferes with the child's physical and psychological development because they lack proper care and attention. Makinde *et al.* (2022) also speak about poverty and family disruptions as affecting caregiving practices and children's well-being in environments of adversity. As pointed out in the study by Stoltenborgh *et al.* (2015), focus needs to be placed on the global rates of sexual abuse, and the effects of sexual violence on children's well-being.

Altogether, this study calls for an imperative need to respond to the challenge of implementing specific preventive efforts and policies with a focus on neglect, sexual abuse, and social risks affecting children in such strings as Kisarawe District. The study delves into the leadership and administrative actions undertaken in Kisarawe District to combat violence against children (VAC). Through interviews with key stakeholders, the Social Welfare Officer highlighted the effectiveness of some platforms available the gender desks, committees such as MTAKUWWA and UWAWA chaired by WEOs in raising community awareness and ensuring incidents are reported for legal action, aligning with broader child protection frameworks (Mutasa, 2021).

Collaboration with NGO's like THPS and Plan International was pivotal in extending outreach and implementing awareness programs, crucial in resource-constrained settings where government resources are limited. Police efforts through the gender desks focus on educating schools and communities about child rights and legal protections. However, the legal avenue is somewhat difficult due to compromised evidence and informal settlements (Smith & Pollak, 2021). A discussed challenge also include failure in securing of convictions despite having evidence, hinting at systemic issues like corruption within legal processes (Mutasa, 2021; Smith & Pollak, 2021). Educational settings faced specific challenges, as illustrated by school pregnancies, highlighting vulnerabilities within institutional frameworks (UNICEF, 2021).

Transformational leadership is said to drive interdependence and collaboration leading to desired outcomes in a Malaysian study (Ramadass *et al.*, 2017). The study further notes that leadership, particularly, transformational leadership, is perceived to be essential to build and establish interdependence between collaboration partners and to drive the collaboration outcomes. Transformational leadership is also associated with long-term strategic actions. It is associated with innovative behaviors (Amankwaa *et al.*, 2021; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Sanders & Shipton, 2012).

In respect to this study, national level leadership has shown some transformational tendencies. For example, in Tanzanian case where Kisarawe district is located the presence of collaboration endeavors among the private sector, NGOs, development partners and the public sector has been possible for decades now subject to policy change in the post socialism era of the second president a charismatic Ali Hassan Mwinyi. He also liberalized the economy and saw the ushering in of a pluralist democracy. The first NGO policy of 2001 while acknowledging that NGO activity has increased since 1985 – when Mwinyi came to power – observe that NGOs numbered 3000 and are crucial to societal development (Kazeri *et al.*, 2024). This is not to be taken for granted as fifth term president approach beginning Nov. 2015 to 2021 seemed to be an antithesis to previous progressive policies.

Again, the establishment of Gender and Children Violence Desks and at police stations and creating platforms that involved the police, community leaders and public officials to work on VAC and gender issues. These are transformative polices despite challenges an inclusive forum created promotes transparency and facilitates follow ups. Called safe heroes, the desks created in 2008 country wide scaled up since 2009 have seen increases reporting of incidences that would have been difficult in the traditional police setting for criminal reporting (Together for Girls 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2018)<sup>1</sup>. In 2022, there were 320 desks country wide and a positive correlation was evident between the presences of gender desks decreases in violence against targeted groups (Kazeri *et al.*, 2024). The inauguration of the gender desks at the regional level were also high-level events, for example in Kilimanjaro region in 2012 the UNICEF Africa Representative from Zimbabwe and the country's Director of Criminal Investigation was present (For detailed information see Michuzi Blog: 2012 <https://www.michuzi.co.tz/2012/05/jeshi-la-polisi-laanzisha-dawati-la.html>).

Tanzania is also reported to be the first country to carry out a country wide survey on violence against children as proposed by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2008. Asha Rose Migiro the undersecretary to Ban Ki-Moon and a Tanzanian was the Chief Guest at the launch (See relief web 2011: 'Violence against children rampant, say officials.'

The incumbent Head of State, Samia Suluhu Hassan, soon after coming to power, announced in opposition to the once imposing predecessor, school pregnancies would not mean the end of girls' formal education. Given the context, such a move is not only bold but transformational from the national leader. This policy is not only providing opportunities once denied but also is to create room for a more open non-traditional non-discriminative community.

<sup>1</sup> Together for girls receive support from UNICEF and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation. They also accredit the collaboration with the public sector that led to the Tanzania's 2013-2016 National Action Plan to address Violence against Children.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

The findings highlight both achievements and ongoing challenges in combating violence against children (VAC) in Kisarawe District. Leadership and administrative actions like establishment of local committees and educational campaigns, have contributed to the increased awareness and reporting of VAC incidents. Efforts from NGOs and local authorities have been instrumental in disseminating information about children's rights and legal protections, albeit constrained by logistical difficulties and cultural resistance.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and implications of the study on violence against children (VAC) in Kisarawe District, several recommendations are proposed to enhance efforts in preventing and addressing VAC effectively: Firstly, the community awareness should be strengthened through campaigns that educate about the types, signs, and consequences of VAC. The awareness can as well be strengthened by engaging local leaders, NGOs, and schools to ensure widespread understanding and vigilance against VAC. Secondly, legal support and enforcement should be enhanced to improve access to legal procedures and support services for victims of VAC. This includes simplifying legal processes, increasing the capacity of law enforcement to handle VAC cases, and ensuring that perpetrators face appropriate consequences. Thirdly, empowering local leadership by providing training and resources. Fourthly, there is a need of establishing and promoting accessible and responsive victim support services, including counselling, medical care, and safe shelters. Teachers and students should be equipped with knowledge and skills to recognize, report, and prevent instances of VAC, fostering a protective environment within educational institutions.

Collaboration and partnership should be encouraged to foster multi-sectorial collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, community-based organizations, and international partners. Pool resources and expertise to implement coordinated strategies and maximize impact in reducing VAC. Cultural norms should be addressed by engaging religious and community leaders in discussions about harmful cultural practices and norms that perpetuate VAC. Continuous research and learning should be in place to deepen understanding of local dynamics and emerging trends related to VAC.

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