

Title: Gender-based violence and family planning practice in Nigeria: An exploration of the linkages between intimate partner violence and contraceptive use among ever married women.

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Background

Violence against women remains one of the major growing concerns in the area of public health because of its adverse effects on the physical and mental health of women as well as other reproductive health issues. The dynamics and volume of women's exposure to intimate partner violence in sub-Saharan Africa region is higher than any other region in the world. Exposure to sexual, physical and emotional violence is high in Africa. The prevailing socio-cultural practices that entrenched the supremacy of men folk in most African societies constitute one of the major factors encouraging continuous exposure of women to different forms of violence. Intimate partner violence has implications for pregnancy complications, unsafe abortion, family planning practice, unintended pregnancy and STIs/AIDS.

Although several studies have documented evidence of women's exposure to domestic violence and poor reproductive health outcomes (Martin, 1999), only few studies have clearly established the linkages between intimate partner violence and contraceptive use. Spousal violence against a woman may result in lack of communication about family planning use and intention to use, therefore undermining her ability to negotiate safe sex through the use of contraceptives, leading to increased chances of contracting sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Conversely, covert use of contraceptive method by a woman may fuel violence among couples, following misinterpretations of intentions and disagreements.

Building on the foregoing, the study seeks to contribute to existing knowledge in the area of interactions between intimate partner violence and contraceptive use, as well as the

influence of other related factors. Few studies have been able to explore the implications of intimate partner violence for use and non-use of contraceptives in Nigeria.

Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine the linkages between intimate partner violence and contraceptive use among ever married women in Nigeria. It also documented the characteristics of women who were exposed to different forms of intimate partner violence.

Data and Methods

The analysis was based on the 2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey. Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) is a nationally representative, stratified, self-weighting probability sample of women aged 15-49. Out of a total of 33,385 women of reproductive age (15-49) interviewed in the NDHS 2008 a sample of 19,388 ever-married women (formal and informal union) who completed the domestic violence module of the survey was selected. The study utilized information on respondents' experiences of three major types of intimate partner violence as indicated in the survey vis-à-vis sexual, physical and emotional violence. The dependent variable for the study was current use of modern contraceptive methods, dichotomized into "1" (currently using any modern method) and "0" (not currently using any modern method). A set of covariates were included in the analysis such as current age of the woman, educational level, partner's educational level, place of residence, employment status, number of other wives, wealth quintiles and religion. Three methods of analysis were used in the study. First the differences in socio-demographic characteristics of women who reported intimate partner violence were profiled through univariate analysis. Second, possible associations between intimate partner violence and contraceptive use were done through cross-tabulation and chi-square test of significance was used to examine the significance of the associations. Third, interrelationships between

women's exposure to intimate partner violence (sexual, physical and emotional violence), background characteristics and contraceptive use were investigated through binary logistic regression models.

Results

Percentage distribution of respondents' background characteristics

The distributions of respondents' background characteristics as presented below show that about 20%, 37% and 43% are in age group less than 20 years, 20-29 years and 30 years or more respectively. The majority of the respondents (64%) live in rural areas. About 36% of the respondents have no formal education. Almost 45% of the respondents had secondary or higher education. With respect to partners' educational attainment, a larger percentage had no formal education. About 40% of the respondents' partners had secondary or higher education. About 9 out of every 10 respondents are married. Almost three-fifth of the respondents is working. Regarding family type, about 7 out of every 10 respondents are in monogamy family type. Also, 37%, 19% and 44% of the respondents are in low, medium and high wealth index category. The majority of the respondents (45%) are Muslim and about 43% of them are other Christians.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of respondents' background characteristics

Variables	Percentage
Age in categories	
<20years	19.5
20-29years	37.3
30 years or more	43.3
Current place of residence	
Urban	35.8
Rural	64.3
Educational level	
No education	35.8
Primary	19.7
Secondary	35.7
Tertiary	8.9
Partners' educational level	
No education	38.5

Primary	21.6
Secondary	27.3
Tertiary	12.6
Marital status	
Married	94.2
Living together	1.5
Widowed/divorced	3.1
Not living together	1.1
Employment status	
Not working	40.4
Working	59.6
Family type	
Monogamy	67.1
Polygyny	32.9
Wealth index	
Low	37.2
Medium	19.0
High	43.8
Religious	
Catholic	11.6
Other Christians	42.3
Muslim	44.6
Traditionalist/others	1.5

2. Percentage of ever-married women who experienced any form of violence by socio-demographic characteristics

This section examines the prevalence of intimate partner violence across different levels of respondents' background characteristics. The distributions show higher occurrence of intimate partner violence among women aged 20-29 years (30%) and 30 years or more (30%). Expectedly, more rural women (31%) than urban women (27%) reported occurrence of violence. About 32% and 37% of women with secondary and primary education reported occurrence of violence respectively. Respondents with partners who had secondary education completed account for higher proportion of those who reported violence. About 32% of working women reported having experience intimate partner violence. More women in polygamous family setting (31%) than those in monogamous family type (28%) reported violence. Intriguingly, higher proportion of women in middle wealth category (34%) reported violence. With respect to religious affiliation, occurrence of intimate partner violence is

among Catholic women (38%), followed by other Christian women (34%) and Traditionalists (33%).

Table 2: Percentage of ever-married women who experienced any form of violence by socio-demographic characteristics

	Reporting no violence		Reporting violence	
	N	%	N	%
Age in categories				
<20years	1314	79.6	336	20.4
20-29years	5258	69.7	2286	30.3
30 years or more	7117	69.8	3077	30.2
Current place of residence				
Urban	4104	73.5	1477	26.5
Rural	9585	69.4	4222	30.6
Educational level				
No education	6962	74.3	2411	25.7
Primary	2709	62.7	1612	37.3
Secondary	2984	67.9	1409	32.1
Tertiary	1034	79.5	267	20.5
Partner's educational level				
No education	5796	75.1	1925	24.9
Primary	2606	65	1402	35
Secondary	3396	66.5	1710	33.5
Tertiary	1710	75	569	25
Marital status				
Married	12879	71.5	5131	28.5
Living together	231	58.9	161	41.1
Widowed/divorced	499	66.4	253	33.6
Not living together	80	34.2	154	65.8
Employment status				
Not working	4920	76	1555	24
Working	8673	67.8	4119	32.2
Family types				
Monogamy	9987	72.1	3870	27.9
Polygyny	3034	68.6	1389	31.4
Wealth quintile				
Low	6634	71.7	2618	28.3
Medium	2427	66.2	1240	33.8
High	4628	71.5	1841	28.5
Religion				
Catholic	1075	61.8	664	38.2
Other Christians	4436	64.2	2473	35.8
Muslim	7836	76.6	2394	23.4
Traditionalist/others	268	67.5	129	32.5
Summary of results	13689	70.6	5699	29.4

3. Percentage distribution of respondents' contraceptive use by occurrence of violence and background characteristics

Table 3 presents the results of cross-tabulations of occurrence of violence and respondents' background factors. Surprisingly, there is evidence of higher contraceptive utilization among women who reported physical violence (15%), sexual violence (12%) and any form of violence (12%) compared to women who did not report any of these types of violence. The association is significant among those who reported physical (0.000) and any form of violence (p-value=0.019). With respect to contraceptive utilization, about 12% of those in age group 20-29 years are currently using contraceptive. Expectedly, contraceptive use is lower among rural women (7%) compared to urban women (16%). Women and respondents' partners with higher education reported higher utilization of contraceptive method. Higher percentage of women who are living together (19%) reported contraceptive use. The prevalence of contraceptive use is higher among working women (13%). Similarly, about 12% of women in monogamous family type compared to 5% of those in polygamous home reported current use contraceptive method. Higher utilization of contraceptives is found among women in high wealth index category. With respect to religious affiliations, about 13%, 16% and 5% of Catholic, other Christian and Muslim women are currently using contraceptives.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents' contraceptive use by occurrence of violence and background characteristics

Variables	Contraceptive use		P-value
	No (%)	Yes (%)	
Ever experienced physical violence			0.000
No	90.0	10.0	
Yes	85.0	15.0	
Ever experienced sexual violence			0.143
No	89.6	10.5	
Yes	87.7	12.2	
Ever experienced emotional violence			0.935
No	89.5	10.5	
Yes	89.5	10.5	

Ever experienced any form of violence			0.019
No	89.7	10.3	
Yes	88.5	11.5	
Age in categories			0.000
<20years	95.3	4.7	
20-29years	87.6	12.4	
30 years or more	88.6	11.4	
Current place of residence			0.000
Urban	83.8	16.2	
Rural	92.7	7.3	
Educational level			0.000
No education	97.4	2.6	
Primary	89.4	10.6	
Secondary	85.4	14.6	
Tertiary	74.6	25.4	
Partners' educational level			0.000
No education	97.2	2.8	
Primary	89.6	10.4	
Secondary	85.3	14.7	
Tertiary	81.6	18.4	
Marital status			0.000
Married	89.6	10.4	
Living together	81.5	18.6	
Widowed/divorced	94.5	5.5	
Not living together	82.0	18.1	
Employment status			0.000
Not working	92.5	7.5	
Working	87.4	12.6	
Family type			0.000
Monogamy	88.2	11.9	
Polygyny	94.8	5.3	
Wealth index			0.000
Low	96.5	3.5	
Medium	91.6	8.4	
High	82.7	17.3	
Religious			0.000
Catholic	87.1	12.9	
Other Christians	84.1	15.9	
Muslim	95.1	4.9	
Traditionalist/others	92.9	7.1	

Multivariate analysis results

Logistic regression models predicting contraceptive use

Three models of binary logistic regression models were fitted in order establish the significant effects of occurrence of intimate partner violence and selected background

characteristics on contraceptive use among ever married women in Nigeria. Model 1 involves estimate of intimate partner violence on contraceptive use. Model 2 involves independent effects of selected background characteristics on contraceptive use. Model 3 involves combined effects of intimate partner violence and selected background characteristics on contraceptive use.

Regarding physical violence, surprisingly, women who reported occurrence of physical violence are 2.10 times as likely as those who did not to use contraceptives. Similarly, women who experienced any form of violence were less likely to use contraceptives compared to women who did not report violence. With respect to age, women in age groups 20-29 and 30 or more years were 1.89 times and 1.90 times as likely as women aged 20 years or less to contraceptives. This relationship was significant in both cases. The odds of using contraceptives decrease significantly by 24% among rural women relative to urban women. Regarding educational attainment, women with higher education were 6.29 times as likely as women with no education to use contraceptives. Similarly, women who are working were 1.93 times more likely as non-working women to use contraceptives. The likelihood of using contraceptives increased by 63% among women in polygamous home compared to women in the reference category in model 2, however, the odds of using these women later decrease by 24% in the full model.

In Models 2 and 3, women in medium and high wealth category were likely to use contraceptives compared to women in low wealth index category. With respect to religious affiliations, women in Muslim religion reported decreased odds of using contraceptives compared to Catholic women, and the relationship is significant. Furthermore, in model 2, relative to women from North Central, women from South South and South West regions reported higher odds of using contraceptives, but the likelihood of using contraceptives decreased by 24% among South South women compared to women from North Central.

Table 2: Logistic regression models predicting contraceptive use

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Odd ratios	P-value	Odd ratios	P-value	Odd ratios	P-value
Physical violence						
No	RC				RC	
Yes	2.10	0.035			1.83	0.098
Sexual violence						
No	RC				RC	
Yes	0.90	0.417			1.00	0.955
Emotional violence						
No	RC				RC	
Yes	1.00	0.994			1.17	0.177
Any form of violence						
No	RC				RC	
Yes	0.68	0.007			0.80	0.157
Age in categories						
Less than 20 years			RC		RC	
20-29 years			1.89	0.003	1.68	0.005
30 or more years			1.90	0.001	2.38	0.000
Place of residence						
Urban			RC		RC	
Rural			0.76	0.003	0.80	0.001
Educational level						
No education			RC		RC	
Primary education			1.05	0.620	2.10	0.000
Secondary			0.72	0.015	2.26	0.000
Tertiary			6.29	0.012	2.46	0.000
Employment status						
Not working			RC		RC	
Working			1.93	0.000	1.38	0.000
Family type						
Monogamy			RC		RC	
Polygamy			1.63	0.000	0.76	0.000
Wealth quintile						
Low			RC		RC	
Medium			1.18	0.052	1.56	0.000
High			1.42	0.002	2.17	0.000
Religion						
Catholic			RC		RC	
Other Christians			1.38	0.051	1.10	0.265
Muslim			0.70	0.029	0.74	0.006
Traditional/others			0.59	0.027	1.04	0.848
Region						
North Central			RC		RC	
North West			0.90	0.348	0.65	0.000
North East			1.03	0.755	0.49	0.000
South East			1.29	0.243	0.51	0.000
South South			1.61	0.005	0.76	0.002
South West			1.42	0.047	1.16	0.063

Model 1: Effect of spousal violence only on modern contraceptive use

Model 1: Effect of background variables on modern contraceptive use

Model3: Effect of spousal violence on modern contraceptive use, controlling for selected background factors.

Discussion

From the analysis, almost three-fifth of ever married women experienced intimate partner violence. This result is consistent with some other studies that have documented high prevalence of intimate partner violence (Askew and Ndhlovu, 2006; Gossaye, 2003). The study found evidence of higher prevalence of intimate partner violence among women in rural areas (31%), with primary education (37%), in an unstable marital relationship (66%) and who are working (32%). At bivariate level, surprisingly, contraceptive use is higher among women who reported occurrence of physical (15%), sexual (12%) and any form of violence (12%) than women who did not. Consistent with other studies, women in higher age group, who live in urban areas, with higher educational attainment, in high wealth index category and from other Christian religious affiliations reported higher use of contraceptive methods.

Significant predictors of contraceptive use were physical violence, any form of violence, age, place of residence, educational level, wealth index, and region. The odds of the significant predictors showed that women who experienced occurrence of physical violence have higher odds of using contraceptives but lower odds among those who reported any form of violence compared to women who did not. This finding was consistent with earlier documented evidence of poor reproductive health outcomes among women with exposure to domestic violence (Martin, 1999). This is because intimate partner violence diminishes the power of a woman to negotiate safe sex practices and use of contraceptive methods. However, higher contraceptive use among those who reported contraceptive use could be as a result of inconsistency in the reporting of violence and contraceptive use among the respondents. Apart from the violence variables, higher education, urban residence, high wealth index, and women from South South and South West regions are positively correlated with higher contraceptive utilization.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that women's exposure to sexual, emotional and any form of spousal violence have implications for lowering modern contraceptive prevalence rate in Nigeria. The study therefore suggests the need for effective and pragmatic policies aimed at preventing the prevalence of spousal violence against women in Nigeria. Also, improving women's socio-economic status (education, access to employment etc.) should be a priority concern to policy makers.

References

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