

MIGRATION AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AMONG UNMARRIED WOMEN IN NIGERIA

¹SHITTU, Sarafa Babatunde
²OMISAKIN, Olusola Akintoye

¹Department of Demography and Social Statistics, Federal University, Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State.
sarafa.shittu@fuoye.edu.ng, shittlebabatunde@yahoo.com

²Department of Demography and Social Statistics, OAU, Ile – Ife, Osun State.
omisakinolusola@yahoo.com

Abstract

In line with modernization theory, rural women migrate to urban areas causing urbanization of these areas in Nigeria and increasing morbidity and mortality which are associated with unprotected sexual intercourses among young, unmarried populations. Using data from the 2003 and 2008 NDHS, the study analyzes differentials in sexual behaviour among migrants and non-migrants thereby examining the impact of migration on sexual behavior of unmarried women. The study found that following an increase in migration trend of 275% between 2003 and 2008, non-migrants were more likely to use contraceptive method than migrants in 2003 (60% and 40% respectively) and 2008 (58% and 42% respectively). Significant factors responsible for the migrants sexual behavior were education and number of lifetime sexual partners ($p < 0.05$). Hence, the study addressed the inadequacy of migration policy to urban destinations leading to creation of new modern societies (Gugler,1997) and effects on reproductive health statuses of migrants.

Key words: Internal migrants, unmarried women, Sexual behaviour, contraceptive use, Nigeria

Background to the Study

Attention has been drawn to the high prevalence of sexual behavior among youths in Nigeria and which has been documented by researchers being responsible for increase in population growth. Unprotected sexual intercourse also contributes to the leading causes of morbidity, maternal mortality, and social problems among women that are sexually active in the country.

Adepoju (2004) in his work stressed that, the volume and configuration of internal migration is changing in sub-Saharan African countries, particularly Nigeria from the traditional male and rural-urban dominance to increasing rate of female migration and emergence of other migration streams. The focus has been shifted from formal migration stream which consists of only men but now towards women who also migrate to enhance their socio – economic status.

As explained by adaptation theory, young unmarried women who migrate to a new cultural environment can experience conflict between their culture of origin and the new location. Some female migrants inevitably involve in indiscriminant sexual behaviour as they strived to survive and succeed in their new environment and for most young women, sexual relationships with men proved to be a major means of getting economic support.

Based on propositions from the literature that girls from poor backgrounds use sexual intercourse as an economic survival strategy especially when they are far from their homes (Fatusi, 2004; Okonkwo et al. 2005), it thereby increase unwanted pregnancies and unintended pregnancies at birth. The unpalatable story is their desperate attempts to get employed either full time or part time in their destination, whether the work is herculean or stress free. Therefore, the needs for the study of sexual behaviour of the migrants in new environment cannot be over emphasized because of its great impact on sexual and reproductive health of the migrants.

Data and Methods

The study utilized secondary data from the 2003 and 2008 Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). The NDHS is a nationally representative stratified, self-weighting probability sample of women aged 15- 49 years. Only unmarried women aged 15 – 49 were considered in this survey. The main dependent variable in the study is migration status while the independent variable is the sexual behaviour of the migrants measured by number of lifetime sexual partners, intention to postpone intercourse until after marriage and current contraceptive methods used. The migration status in the NDHS was measured by the duration of stay in their current place of residence. Respondents who had stayed for up to one year or more were considered as migrants while the non-migrants include those who have stayed below one year, visitors and those who reported staying always.

Using STATA package, descriptive statistics, chi-square, t-test and logistic regression were used in summarizing the body of data and establishing the relationship between migrants' status and sexual behavior of the target population.

Results and Discussions

Table1: Mean number of Lifetime Sexual Partners and Age at first Sexual Intercourse of Unmarried Women by Migration Status

Variable	2003		2008	
	Migrant	Non-migrant	Migrant	Non-migrant
Life Time Sexual	Na	Na	1.8931	1.8106

partners				
Age at first Sexual Intercourse	17.4783	17.2703	18.1335	17.4984
t. = -1.7035,	p value = 0.0443			

The distribution of respondents' migration status by lifetime sexual partners and age at first sexual intercourse evidently show that migrants were more exposed to sexual activities than the non-migrants. In 2008, the mean number of lifetime sexual partners is 1.89 for migrants, while that of non-migrants is 1.81. Again, the migrants mean age at sexual intercourse is 18 years, as opposed to mean age of 17 years for the non-migrants in 2008. The mean age was also greater for migrants than non-migrants in 2003. These results show the impact of migration status on sexual behavior i.e. migration of unmarried women increases the tendencies for engaging in premarital sex

Table 2: Intention to postpone intercourse until marriage and current contraceptive methods used by Migration Status

Variable	2003				2008			
	Migrants		Non-migrants		Migrants		Non-migrants	
	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)
Intention to postpone intercourse until marriage	Na	Na	Na	Na	120 (34.5)	1175 (29.9)	228 (65.5)	2756 (70.1)
	No method	Any method	No method	Any method	No method	Any method	No method	Any method
current contraceptive methods used	597 (33.1)	113 (39.8)	1206 (66.9)	171 (60.2)	2131 (31.7)	537 (41.9)	4589 (68.3)	746 (58.14)

The distribution of respondents' migration status by intention to postpone sexual intercourse and contraceptive use indicates that in 2008 the non-migrants (70%) are more than two times likely to postpone sex compared with migrants (30%). As far as contraceptive use is concerned, non-migrants were more likely to use any method than migrants in 2003 (60% and 40% respectively) and 2008 (58% and 42% respectively).

Table 3: Binary logistic regression of Contraceptive among the Unmarried Women

Variable	Categories	2003		2008	
		Odds ratio	p-value	Odds ratio	p-value
Migration status	Migrants	RC		RC	
	Non-migrants	0.9877	0.931	1.1807	0.016
Age	15-19	RC		RC	
	20-24	2.5417	0.000	3.4208	0.000
	25-29	3.5351	0.000	3.7722	0.000
	30-34	1.6669	0.204	2.7172	0.000
	35-39	1.6024	0.636	1.9819	0.020
	40-44	1	-	0.5134	0.369
	45-49	1	-	0.5067	0.517
	Total				
	Rural	0.6882	0.009	0.9080	0.163

Place of residence	urban	RC		RC	
	Total				
Educational level	No education	RC		RC	
	Primary	2.2904	0.190	4.7933	0.001
	Secondary	6.0423	0.003	10.8855	0.000
	Tertiary	11.9047	0.000	19.3645	0.000
	Total				
Employment Status	Currently Working	RC		RC	
	Not working	1.8648	0.000	1.4601	0.000
	Total				
Religion	Catholic	RC		RC	
	Other Christians	1.2527	0.140	1.3411	0.001
	Islam	0.9782	0.912	0.8206	0.112
	Traditional	1		0.8586	0.780

In 2003, the non-migrants were less likely to use contraceptives than the migrants by 2%, but in 2008, the non-migrants were 18% more likely to contraceptives than the migrants and the association between migration status and contraceptive use was significant (p -value <0.05). In 2003, the odds of using a contraceptive is 60% greater among women aged 35-39, 67% greater among women aged 30-34, about 3 times greater among women aged 20-24 and about 4 times greater among women 25-25, compared with women aged 15-19. Similarly, the results for 2008 indicate that women aged 35-39 were about 2 times more likely, women aged 30-34 were about 3 times more likely, women aged 20-24 were 3 times more likely and those of age 25-29 were about 4 times more likely to use contraceptives relative to women of age 15-19.

The rural women were less likely to use contraceptives by 32% in 2003 and 9% in 2008 compared to counterparts who were urban residents. Generally, the impact of educational was significant at secondary and tertiary levels in both 2003 and 2008 (p -values <0.05). The results show that the odds of contraceptive use 6 times greater in 2003 and about 11 times greater in 2008 for women with secondary education, and 12 times greater in 2003 and 19 times greater in 2008 for women with tertiary education, as opposed to the unmarried women with no education. With respect to employment status, unmarried women who were not working were significantly and consistently more likely to use contraceptives than currently working women with 86% greater in 2003 and 46% greater in 2008. In terms of religion, other Christians were 25% more likely to use contraceptives in 2003 and 34% more likely in 2008, relative to the Catholic women.

Hypothesis: There is no significant association between migration of unmarried women and sexual behavior.

Table 4: Bivariate relationship of migration status and contraceptive use

Contraceptive use	2003		2008	
	Non-migrants	Migrants	Non-migrants	Migrants
No method	1206 (66.9)	597 (33.1)	4589 (68.3)	2131 (31.7)
Any method	171 (60.2)	113 (39.8)	746 (58.1)	537 (41.86)
Total	1377 (66.0)	710 (34.0)	5335 (66.7)	2668 (33.3)
Chi-square (p-value)	4.8735 (0.027)		49.8796 (0.000)	

Table 4 above shows that, among the unmarried women using any method of contraceptives, the non-migrants were 60% and migrants were 40% in 2003. Similarly in 2008, among the unmarried women using any method of contraceptives, the non-migrants were 58% and migrants were 42%. The association between migration of unmarried women and sexual behaviour was significantly significant in both years (p-value<0.05).

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper addresses sexual behavior among unmarried migrants and non-migrants women aged 15 – 49 years. The results showed that the rate of rural-urban migration is on the increase in Nigeria. Sexual behavior is influenced by migration status i.e. the migrants were more likely to engage in unprotected sexual intercourse than the non-migrant. The non - migrants' number of lifetime sexual partners are significantly lesser than that of migrants. (t= 1.7035, p < 0.005)

References

- Adepoju, A., 2004. "Review of research and data on human trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa" Paper presented at the IOM International Expert Meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome 27-28 May.
- Adepoju, A., 2004. "Trends in international migration in and from Africa" in Massey, D. S. and J. E. Taylor (Eds). International Migration Prospects and Policies in a Global Market. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dian He, You Zhou, Ning Ji, Shizhong Wu, Zhijin Wang, Peter Decat, Eileen Moyer, Meile Minkauskiene, Cheng Pang and Yimin Cheng(2012):Study on sexual and reproductive health behaviors ofunmarried female migrants in China, *Journal of . Obstetrics Gynaecol. Research. Vol. 38, No. 4: 632–638, April 2012*
- Fatusi AO. (2004): Report submitted to the Association of African University. Ghana: Jun, 2004. 2004. Study of African universities' response to HIV/AIDS: the Nigerian universities.
- Gugler J, Ludwar-Ene G. (1995): Gender and Migration in Africa South of the Sahara. In: Baker J, Aina TA, editors. *The Migration Experience in Africa*. Nordiska Africainstitutet; Uppsala, Sweden.
- Gugler, Josef, ed. 1997. *Cities in the Developing World: Issues, Theory, and Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Makinwa-Adebusoye, Paulina (1990) 'Female Migration in Africa', in *Conference on the Role of Migration in African Development: Issues and Policies for the '90s Vol. I Commissioned Papers* (Dakar: Union for African Population Studies), 198-211.
- Mberu B, Michael J, (2011): Internal Migration and Sexual Initiation among Never Married Youths in Nigeria. *Soc Sci Med*. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2014 August 5.
- Okonkwo PI, Fatusi AO, Ilika AL(2005):Perception of peers' behaviour regarding sexual health decision making among female undergraduates in Anambra State, Nigeria. *African Health Science.*; 5(2):107-13.
Published in final edited form as: *Soc Sci Med*. 2011 April; 72(8): 1284–1293. Published online 2011 March 3.