

Intimate partners' violence and birth spacing in Nigeria- implications for high fertility

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Abstract

Past researchers have indicated that intimate partners' violence is on the increase which was revealed to be associated with victim's reproductive and health life. In addition, the population of Nigerian population is high with over 177 million people (PRB, 2014)) Consequently, this study was done using the NDHS(2013) to investigate the influence of socio-demographic factors and intimate partners' violence on birth spacing in Nigeria at bivariate, univariate and multivariate level (binary logistic regression). The study revealed that intimate partners' violence significantly influenced child spacing in Nigeria after controlling for confounding variables. The current age of mothers, religion, region, wealth index significantly influenced birth spacing in Nigeria at p -value < 0.05 . The study therefore recommends that policy and programs should address the significant factors that influence birth spacing in order to achieve that aim of reducing fertility and improved maternal health in Nigeria.

Keywords: Child Spacing, Violence

Introduction

Over the years, there have been several reports of sexual abuse and other forms of violence and it is one of the most serious global and systemic forms of human rights violations that exist till date. The most common type of violence directed against women is actually carried out by their partners. This violence can either lead to unintended pregnancies and associated pregnancy outcomes.

Intimate partners' violence is any act against a person's sexuality or rights using force, intimidation or any other means by any person closely related to the victim, in any place, including home and work place. It also the violence can be in form sexual, physical and emotional violence which have been reported having reproductive and health outcomes.

Despite special interventions in Nigeria on curbing intimate partners' violence and its implications by increasing campaigns against sexual violence and also " war declaration against the acts ", It is still reported having high incidences of intimate partners' violence in the country. The effects of sexual and other form of violence on birth intervals which eventually influence fertility behaviour of women's health and well-being are not conclusive and cannot be over emphasized. According to the latest Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2013), The TFR among women in Nigeria is twice the replacement level. Also there exists a variation in Total fertility rates of regions across the country. By implications, the total fertility rate in the country is still high consequent to high fertility rates in some regions of the country which are associated with cultural diversities which has influence on fertility behavior of individuals.

Several factors have been documented responsible for violence among women by their partners, for example, there is a complex interconnection between poverty and sexual violence. This is particularly important for understanding maltreatment in the lives of African women. Women of low income status, educational status,

low autonomy is vulnerable to assault by her partners. However, the influence on birth spacing especially across the regions in the country has not been well researched hence, this study.

Methodology

The study utilized secondary data from the 2013 Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). The NDHS is a nationally representative stratified, self-weighting probability sample of women aged 15- 49 years. A total of 38,948 women aged 15 – 49 were considered in this survey. The main dependent variable in the study is birth spacing which was dichotomized into less than two years and greater or equal to 2 years while the independent variable is the intimate partners violence (sexual, emotional and physical).

Using STATA package, descriptive statistics, chi-square and binary logistic regression were used in summarizing the body of data and establishing the relationship between intimate partners’ violence and birth spacing of the target population.

Table 1. Mean with Standard Deviation (SD) and weighted percentage distribution of women by their background characteristics			
Characteristics	Sample of women		Mean±SD
	No.	%	

Results and Discussion

Current Age (years)			
15 – 19	7,905	20.08	28.8±9.6
20 – 24	6,714	17.35	
25 – 29	7,037	18.34	
30 – 34	5,373	14.04	
35 – 39	4,701	12.11	
40 – 45	3,663	9.29	
45+	3,555	8.79	
Religion			
Christian	19,838	47.07	
Islam	18,578	52.00	
Traditional	352	0.93	
Place of Residence			
Urban	15,545	42.14	
Rural	23,403	57.86	
Region			
North Central	6,251	14.31	
North East	6,630	14.80	
North West	9,673	30.49	
South East	4,462	11.49	
South South	6,058	12.69	
South West	5,874	16.21	
Wealth Index			
Poor	14,117	37.38	
Middle	8,001	19.22	
Rich	16,830	43.40	
Partners Occupation			
Not working	365	1.16	
Non-Agriculture	18,029	62.83	
Agriculture	10,545	36.01	
Total	38,948	100	

Table 2. Percentage distribution of indicators of dependent and independent variables.

Variables	Sample of women	
	No.	%
Intimate Partners Violence		
No	16,488	75.39
Yes	5,765	24.61
Emotional Violence		
No	17,799	80.97
Yes	4,477	19.03
Physical Violence		
No	18,879	85.37
Yes	3,385	14.63
Sexual Violence		
No	21,070	95.44
Yes	1,190	4.56
Birth Spacing		
<2 years	9,282	48.10
At least 2 years	10,550	51.90

Results and Discussion

Table 1 and 2 revealed the percentage distribution of the study variables. It was revealed that women age 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45+ were 20.08%, 17.35%, 18.34%, 14.04%, 12.11%, 9.29% and 8.79% respectively. Christian, Islam, and traditional women were 47.07%, 52% and 0.93% respectively. Urban and rural women were 42.14% and 57.86% respectively. North central, North East, North West, South-East, South South and South West women were 14.31%, 14.80%, 30.49%, 11.49%, 12.69% and 16.21% respectively. Women in poor, middle and rich wealth index were 37.38%, 19.22% and 43.40% respectively. Partners not working, engaging in non-agriculture, and engaging in agriculture work were 1.16%, 62.83% and 36.01% respectively. In table 2, the percentage distribution of indicators of intimate partner violence and the frequency distribution of the dependent variables were revealed. Victims of IPV were (24.61%) and those who were not victims of IPV were 75.39%. Victims of emotional violence were 19.03% and those not victims of emotional violence were 80.97%; victims of physical violence were 14.63% and the non-victims of physical violence were 85.37%, victims of sexual violence were 4.56% and non-victims of sexual violence were 95.44%. Women who engage in at years birth spacing were 51.9% and those engage in birth spacing less than 2 years were 48.1%.

Table 3. Bivariate distribution of women's background characteristics and Birth spacing.

Characteristics	Birth spacing		Chi-square
	<2 years	>=2 years	

Current Age (years)				
15 – 19	41.29	58.71	0.000	chi2(6) = 950.6051
20 – 24	37.34	62.66		
25 – 29	41.81	58.19		
30 – 34	46.56	53.44		
35 – 39	59.65	40.35		
40 – 45	70.86	29.14		
45+	80.51	19.49		
Religion				
Christian	43.90	56.10	0.000	chi2(2) = 45.8375
Islam	48.82	51.18		
Traditional	47.88	52.12		
Place of Residence				
Urban	46.24	53.76	0.255	chi2(1) = 1.2943
Rural	47.09	52.91		
Region				
North Central	43.53	56.47	0.000	chi2(5) = 187.5945
North East	46.23	53.77		
North West	51.40	48.60		
South East	54.87	45.13		
South South	41.69	58.31		
South West	39.61	60.39		
Wealth Index				
Poor	48.17	51.83	0.001	chi2(2) = 13.9575
Middle	44.77	55.23		
Rich	46.18	53.82		
Partners Occupation				
Not working	47.89	52.11	0.531	chi2(2) = 1.2678
Non-Agriculture	48.39	51.61		
Agriculture	47.52	52.48		

Table 4. Bivariate distribution of Dependent and Independent variables				
Variables	Birth Spacing		P- value	Chi-square
	<2 years	>=2 years		
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	49.84	50.16	0.000	chi2(1) = 27.1288
Yes	43.90	56.10		
Emotional Violence				
No	49.42	50.58	0.000	chi2(1) = 20.0571
Yes	44.29	55.71		
Physical Violence				
No	49.23	50.77	0.001	chi2(1) = 11.5503
Yes	38.71	61.29		
Sexual Violence				
No	47.82	52.18	0.000	chi2(1) = 24.6425
Yes	38.73	61.27		

Table 4 revealed the relationship between intimate partner violence and birth spacing. It was revealed that intimate partner violence was significantly related with birth spacing ($p < 0.05$). Its further sub-classified intimate partner violence into emotional violence, physical violence and sexual violence. These three classification of intimate partner violence significantly influenced birth spacing in Nigeria.

Table 5. Distribution of women by IPV across Regions				
Variables	Birth Spacing			Chi-square
	<2 years	>=2 years	P-value	
North Central				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	46.00	54.00	0.004	Chi2(1) = 8.1823
Yes	39.01	60.99		
North East				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	52.48	47.52	0.000	Chi2(1) = 18.9124
Yes	43.17	56.83		
North West				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	51.89	48.11	0.000	Chi2(1) = 13.1694
Yes	44.40	55.60		
South East				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	58.79	41.21	0.001	Chi2(1) = 11.3360
Yes	48.79	51.21		
South South				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	45.58	54.42	0.611	Chi2(1) = 0.2592
Yes	44.16	55.84		
South West				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	42.62	57.38	0.015	Chi2(1) = 5.9572
Yes	48.68	51.32		
Urban				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	49.39	50.61	0.019	Chi2(1) = 5.5036
Yes	45.75	54.25		
Rural				
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	50.46	49.54	0.000	chi2(1) = 32.8725
Yes	43.37	56.63		

Table 5 revealed the relationship between region and residence and birth spacing. It was revealed that region and residence were significantly related with birth spacing at p -value < 0.05

Table 6. Binary logistic regression showing the effect of IPV and Socio – demographic factors on birth spacing		
Characteristics	Birth spacing	
	ORP> z 	95% CI

Current Age (years)				
15 – 19	RC	-	-	
20 – 24	1.585078	0.000		1.41 - 1.77
25 – 29	1.424537	0.000		1.27 - 1.58
30 – 34	1.180551	0.005		1.05 - 1.32
35 – 39	.6821677	0.000		.602 -.772
40 – 45	.4179969	0.000		.357 -.488
45+	.2418152	0.000		.192 -.303
Religion				
Christian	RC	-	-	
Islam	.835318	0.000		.761 -.916
Traditional	.9870193	0.937		.712-1.36
Place of Residence				
Urban	RC	-	-	
Rural	.9362098	0.124		.860 -1.01
Region				
North Central	RC	-	-	
North East	.9920732	0.889		.887 - 1.10
North West	.8794742	0.020		.789 - .979
South East	.6785311	0.000		.588 - .782
South South	1.079437	0.256		.946 - 1.23
South West	1.13794	0.043		1.00 - 1.28
Wealth Index				
Poor	RC	-	-	
Middle	.9982555	0.970		.912 - 1.09
Rich	.862955	0.004		.779 - .955
Partners Occupation				
Not working	RC	-	-	
Non-Agriculture	1.028275	0.857		.759 - 1.39
Agriculture	1.088873	0.586		.801 - 1.47
Intimate Partners Violence				
No	RC	-	-	
Yes	1.149735	0.001		1.05 - 1.24

Table 7. Binary logistic regression showing the effect of Intimate Partners Violence on Birth Spacing

Characteristics	Birth spacing		
	RC	ORP> z 95%	CI
Intimate Partners Violence			
No	RC	-	-
Yes	1.22452	0.000	1.13- 1.32

Table 7 revealed the effect of intimate partner violence on birth spacing without adjusting for confounding variables of the study. It revealed that victims of intimate partner violence were more likely to space their birth (O.R 1.22; C.I 1.13-1.32).

Table 6 revealed the effect of the study intimate partner violence and socio-demographic factors on birth spacing in Nigeria, adjusting for confounding effect. It was revealed that current age of mothers, religion, region, and wealth index significantly influenced birth spacing in Nigeria. Women age 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45+ were 1.59, 1.42, 1.18 times more likely and 0.68, 0.42, 0.24 times respectively less likely to practice birth-spacing beyond two years compared to women age 15-19 years. Islamic women were 0.84 times less likely to practice birth spacing compared to Christian women. North-west, South East and South west women were 0.88, 0.68 less likely and 1.14 times more likely to practice birth spacing compared to North central women. Rich women were 0.86 times less likely to practice birth spacing compared to poor women, and women who were victims of intimate partner violence were 1.15 times more likely to practice birth spacing compared to those who are not victims.

Discussion

The study revealed that 51.9% of the respondents engage in birth spacing of a minimum of 2 years. It was revealed that current age of mothers, religion, region, wealth index and intimate partner violence significantly influenced birth spacing in Nigeria. Women in the early reproductive ages (15-34) were more likely to space birth compared to women in late reproductive ages beyond 35, when compared to women in age 15-19. Christian women practice birth spacing of two years minimum more than the Muslims. South-west women practice birth spacing more than northern women (north-central, North West) and south east women. Poor women practice birth spacing more than the rich women and victims of intimate partner violence were also more likely to practice birth spacing compared to non-victim women. These results are consistent with previous findings.

This study therefore recommends that the significant factors in this study should be addressed in programs and policies so as to increase the practice of birth spacing of a minimum of two years in Nigeria.

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