

# Intimate Partner Violence Predictors in Monogamous Unions in Nigeria

Adebayo Olukunle Ajala

Social Sector Group, Social and Governance Policy Research Department, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), P.M.B. 5, U.I. P.O, Ibadan, Nigeria

## Abstract

Intimate partner violence is of a global public health concern. However, population-based studies of its correlates are limited in Nigeria. There are fewer studies that have made use of couple data, the few studies that have focused on the issue of intimate partner have mostly used data for women. The patriarchal nature of our country makes it vital to make use of couple data. The paper therefore sets to fill this gap. The results showed that there is intimate partner violence in 24% of the marital unions. It cuts across all strata of the society. The logistic regression results showed that age of wife, age of husband, religion of wife, number of times been married by the Husband, wealth quintile, a history of family violence by the woman are factors that significantly affects the chances of experiencing intimate partner sexual violence. The controlling issues exercised by husbands are also significant correlates of intimate partner violence. The results underscore the need to prevent the incidence of intimate partner violence. It is pertinent for men to be targeted as more emphasis are placed on addressing the root causes of their controlling behaviours as well as the issue of alcohol use. There is also the need to build the capacity of young girls and adolescents to have appropriate negotiating and communication skills before entry into the marriage institutions.

**Keywords:** Intimate Partner Violence, Couple, Women, Marital Union

## 1. Introduction

Violence against women is a foremost health and human rights concern globally that has become entrenched in the social, cultural attitudes and norms with males having the edge over female (WHO, 2012; Naved and Persson, 2005; Krug *et al.*, 2002). It is a common plague that takes place in public and private spaces (UN Women, 2015). The United Nations defines violence against women as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life' (WHO, 2014). The most common form of violence against women globally is that perpetrated by their partners (Heise, 2011). Intimate partner violence (IPV) could be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, or financial in nature and it occurs between intimate partners (Sprague *et al.*, 2016). The incidence of violence against women cuts across social, economic, and cultural boundaries (Parish, *et al.*, 2004); it is found both in urban and rural areas. Although wives may use physical force against their husbands, women are generally considered the main victims of family violence (Galindo and Serrano, 1994). The establishment of the prevalence and the associated risk patterns of intimate partner violence is very crucial to addressing women's health and development (McCloskey, *et al.*, 2005).

It has been estimated that at least 30 per cent of women above 15 years have experienced intimate partner violence at least once in their life time (WHO, 2014). Indeed, in sub-Saharan Africa, at least one third of the women are affected by intimate partner violence (McCloskey, *et al.*, 2016). The situation in Nigeria is such that every woman can expect to be a victim of a form of violence or the other at some point in her life (Okemgbo *et al.*, 2002). Intimate partner violence in marital unions is often under-reported due to the perception that it is crowded in shame, embarrassment of being judged, blamed or not even believed (Johnson, 2012). Marital violence revolves around cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles and partners' expectations of each other's roles within relationships, particularly those related to wifely obedience and domestic service (Ezeh and Gage, 1998). Patriarchy is a power system organised around male authority and male privilege, it indeed constitutes a form of structural violence against women (Benoit *et al.*, 2015, Kiragu, 1995). The implication is that there are controlling issues that may exacerbate the incidence of intimate partner violence.

There are factors that can influence the nature of violence, these include among others cultural or religious practices, poverty, the legal and policy environments (WHO, 2012). Some of the other risk factors for perpetrating and experiencing intimate partner violence include: exposure to child maltreatment, witnessing family violence, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes that are accepting of violence and gender inequality (WHO, 2014; Kwagala, *et al.*, 2013; Abeya, *et al.*, 2011; Jewkes, *et al.*, 2002). Alcohol use and abuse, and supportive attitudes towards wife-beating are also predictors of intimate partner violence (Koenig *et al.*, 2004; Zablotska *et al.*, 2009, Koenig *et al.*, 2003a; Alio *et al.*, 2010). Intimate partner violence is not limited to a certain age, culture, or socioeconomic status (Cherniack *et al.*, 2005; Naved and Persson, 2005; Krug *et al.*, 2002). Thus, there is the need to examine the correlates of Intimate partner violence in monogamous unions in Nigeria.

Age of the woman, level of education, wealth status and geographical region have been found to have significant effect on intimate partner violence (McInturff, 2013; Wagman, *et al.*, 2012; Were *et al.*, 2011; Ruiz-

Perez *et al.*, 2006; Koenig *et al.*, 2006; Karamagi *et al.*, 2006; Xu *et al.*, 2005; Naved and Persson, 2005; Parish *et al.*, 2004; Koenig *et al.*, 2004; Koenig *et al.*, 2003; Jewkes, *et al.*, 2002). According to Ruiz-Perez *et al.* (2006), an unemployed woman is significantly likely to experience intimate partner violence. Koenig *et al.* (2006) found that higher levels of education among husbands were significantly negatively associated with intimate partner violence. Spousal age difference is an important variable, the larger the spousal age difference, the more difficult it may be for wives to express views contrary to their husband's and where this happens it engenders intimate partner violence (Oyediran and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2005). In situations where men have lower educational level than their wives, they use intimate partner violence as a means of maintaining their dominant position in the family as prescribed by patriarchy (Xu *et al.*, 2005 and Gage, 2005). Koenig *et al.* (2006) also found that higher levels of education among husbands were significantly negatively associated with intimate partner violence. It is expected in this study that when the higher level of education is not in favour of the husband, the union experiences intimate partner violence. Spousal age difference is an important variable in patriarchal settings, where age gap defines most relationships, especially in marital union. The larger the spousal age difference, the more difficult it may be for wives to express views contrary to their husband and where this happens it engenders intimate partner violence (Oyediran and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2005).

Studies suggests that physical violence in intimate relationships is often accompanied by other types of violence (Cherniack *et al.* 2005 and Krug *et al.*, 2002). Odujinrin (1993) has pointed out that in Nigeria, women are often encouraged to stay in abusive relationships because of the cultural beliefs that a woman's place is with her husband and because divorced and separated women are not held in high social regard compared to women who remain in marriage. Intimate partner violence has negative effect on women's reproductive health, because it often occurs about pregnancy and delivery or with fidelity and sexuality (Glantz and Halperin, 1996; Heise, 1993). The links between infidelity and physical violence include the following pathways: men who have concurrent sexual partners may be attached to strong masculine identities that emphasize sexual conquests (Malamuth *et al.*, 1991). Second, women who suspect that their husbands of infidelity may become disrespectful and abusive towards men out of jealousy and anger (Karamagi *et al.*, 2006; Jewkes *et al.*, 2006; Dunkle *et al.*, 2004). Third, men may use violence in response to their partner's accusations of infidelity (Van der Straten *et al.*, 1995). Finally, men who suspect their wives are cheating may also use violent means to reinstate their role as head of the

Intimate partner violence is more common in urban areas than rural areas (Naved and Persson, 2005 and Hindin and Adair, 2002). The implication of this is that there are some factors in the urbanisation process that increases stress-induced violence.

Women that witnessed violence between parents may construct attachment models along dominance-subordination and victim-perpetrator dimensions (Gage, 2005). Therefore, such women when exposed to intimate partner violence would fall back on their understanding of what relationships are about, who they are in relationships, and what to expect from a relationship partner (intimate partner violence). Intimate partner violence has serious reproductive health consequences, including inability to use a contraceptive method at all or consistently, unwanted/ unintended pregnancy, and increased levels of STI and HIV/AIDS (Diop-Sidibe *et al.*, 2006; Stephenson *et al.*, 2006; Pallitto and O'Campo 2004 and 2005 and Hathaway *et al.*, 2005).

This paper accomplishes three main objectives: to describe the prevalence of intimate partner violence, and reciprocal violence among monogamous couples in Nigeria; and to test for the independent variables thought to be associated with IPV. In sub-Saharan Africa, less research on IPV has taken a dyadic perspective (Choi & Ting, 2008; Conroy, 2014).

## 2. Data and Methods

The data for this paper was derived from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey [NDHS} 2013, accessed with permission from the Measure DHS Program website. The NDHS 2013 is the fourth survey of its kind, it is a cross-sectional nationally representative survey that used a stratified three-stage cluster design based on the sampling frame the list of enumeration areas (EAs) prepared for the 2006 Population Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. A detailed description of the sampling procedure was reported in the NDHS 2013 report (National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF International 2014). The DHS provides insightful information on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics at both household and individual levels. The survey used three questionnaires which were based on the internationally accepted model questionnaires but were modified to take cognisance of Nigeria's requirement: The Household Questionnaire, the Woman's Questionnaire, and the Man's Questionnaire. The questionnaire for the Woman and the Man was directed at those age 15-49, but the men were selected in every second household in the NDHS 2013 sample. There was no household from which more than a man and a woman were selected. A subsample of one eligible woman in each household was randomly selected to be asked additional questions regarding domestic violence. The data for this paper included only unions that are monogamous, and the woman was interviewed for the Domestic Violence module of the women's questionnaire. Only one randomly selected woman was interviewed for the Domestic violence module per household in line with the DHS protocol. This informed the choice of only couples in monogamous unions. The

Couple<sup>1</sup> data as produced by NPC and ICF was the base of the data. This is because the focus of this study is on intimate partner violence and there is the interest in examining reciprocal violence in marital unions, as such the analysis is restricted to monogamous unions.

#### *Measures of outcome variable*

Intimate partner violence was captured by asking about emotional/psychological, physical, and sexual violence. For the violence perpetrated by the wife against the husband was only limited to physical violence. Intimate partner violence was captured by asking the woman the following questions: Does (did) your husband/partner ever:

- a) Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others?
- b) Threaten to hurt or harm you or someone close to you?
- c) Insult you or make you feel bad about yourself?
- d) Push you, shake you or throw something at you?
- e) Slap you?
- f) Twist your arm or pull your hair?
- g) Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you?
- h) Kick you, drag you or beat you up?
- i) Try to choke you or burn you on purpose?
- j) Threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon?
- k) Physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him even when you did not want to?
- l) Physically force you to perform any other sexual acts you did not want to?
- m) Force you with threats or in any other way to perform sexual acts you did not want to?

When the respondents give a “yes” answer to one or more of (a) to (c) constitutes evidence of emotional/psychological violence, a “yes” answer to one or more of items (d) to (j) constitutes evidence of physical violence, while a “yes” answer to one or more of items (k) to (m) constitutes evidence of sexual violence. The questions were with reference to within the last 12 months before the survey.

Self-reported marital infidelity was captured as follows. Respondents were asked of the last three persons they had sexual relationships with in the last 12 months. If the respondent has had any sexual relationship with at least a person other than the spouse in the last 12 months preceding the survey, then the respondent has been unfaithful to the spouse.

#### *Statistical analyses*

Frequency distributions was used to describe the characteristics of the couple, the husband and wife. Cross-tabulations with Pearson’s chi-square tests were used to examine the associations between intimate partner violence in monogamous unions and the socio-demographic characteristics of the union and the members of the union. The level of statistical significance using p-values was set at  $p < 0.05$ . Multivariate analysis using binary Logistic regression was finally used to examine the predictors of intimate partner violence in monogamous unions. The explanatory variables were included after a test of parsimony, that is only those variables whose p-values were less than 0.05 during the chi-square tests were included in the logistic model. The results of the logistic regression are presented in the form of Odds Ratios (OR) and their 95% confidence intervals.

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<sup>1</sup> There were 8,658 couples interviewed, but 6986 were interviewed for the DV module, 5,531 couples who are in Monogamous unions are included in this paper

### 3. FINDINGS

Table 1 Percent distribution of respondents by selected background characteristics

Characteristics	Husband	Wife
<b>Age</b>		
15-19	0.3	11.3
20-24	5.3	21.0
25-29	16.9	27.8
30-34	22.5	19.1
35-39	22.7	13.4
40-44	17.5	5.8
45-49	14.8	1.6
<i>Mean Age (In Years)</i>	<i>35.26</i>	<i>27.96</i>
<b>Education level attained</b>		
No Education	27.4	38.2
Primary	21.0	19.5
Secondary	35.0	32.7
Higher	16.6	9.6
<b>Currently working</b>	98.6	68.5
<b>Religion</b>		
Catholic	9.0	8.1
Other Christian	37.3	38.8
Islam	52.0	51.5
Others	1.8	1.5
<b>Number of Unions</b>		
Once	87.1	93.2
More than Once	11.1	6.1
No Response	1.7	0.7
<b>Fidelity to Spouse</b>		
Not Faithful	99.9	5.2
Faithful	0.1	94.8
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0
<b>Number of couples</b>		5531

Source: NDHS, 2013

The husbands are on the average older than their wives. The proportion of husbands with at least secondary education is higher than the proportion of wives with at least same level of education. Table 1 shows that a higher proportion of females than males do not have any formal education. Virtually all the husbands are working with only about two-thirds of the wives working. There is the freedom of religious practice even in monogamous unions as there are differences in the proportion of husbands and wives indicating various religions. At least 90 per cent of the wives are in their first marital union while more of the husbands are currently in at least their second marriage. Faithfulness in marital union was measured by examining the relationship with the last three sexual partners of the husband and the wife in the last 12 months preceding the survey. An individual is faithful when he or she has only had sexual relationships only with the spouse in the last 12 months preceding the survey, which indicates fidelity in marital unions. The level of infidelity by the husbands is virtually universal even though they are in monogamous unions. The reverse is the case among the wives who are virtually faithful to their marriages. The behaviour of the husbands portends great danger to the country's quest to reverse and halt the spread of Human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted infections.

Table 2: Couple Characteristics in Marital union

	Percentage
<b>Place of Residence</b>	
Urban	37.8
Rural	62.2
<b>Age difference</b>	
Wife older than husband	2.1
Husband 0-4yrs older than wife	25.7
Husband 5-9yrs older than wife	42.8
Husband 10-14yrs older than wife	21.6
Husband at least 15yrs older than wife	7.8
<b>Education disparity between Couple</b>	
Both no education	24.4
Both have same level of education	34.3
Wife more educated than Husband	11.1
Husband more educated than wife	30.1
<b>Geopolitical zone</b>	
North-Central	17.2
North-East	18.4
North-West	27.8
South-East	7.1
South-South	14.0
South-West	15.5
<b>Wealth Quintile</b>	
Poorest	18.9
Poorer	20.0
Middle	17.4
Richer	20.3
Richest	23.4
<b>Mutual fidelity to partner in last 12 months</b>	
Not faithful	99.9
Faithful to partner	0.1
Wife witnessing father ever beating her mother	10.4
<b>Controlling issues</b>	
Husband jealous if wife talks with other men	56.9
Husband accuses wife of unfaithfulness	8.7
Husband does not permit wife to meet female friends	10.3
Husband tries to limit wife's contact with family	6.2
Husband insists on knowing where wife is	38.7
Number of Couples	5,531

Source: NDHS, 2013

As shown in Table 2, about three-fifths of the couples are resident in the rural areas. Majority of the husbands are at least five years older than their wives. It is only in about one-tenth of the unions that the wife has higher level of education than the husband. At least 34 per cent of the couples are in unions where both the husband and wife have same level of education. There is said to be mutual fidelity between a couple when both have not engaged in sexual relationship with another person different from their spouse in the last 12 months preceding the survey. As may be expected mutual fidelity is low mostly due to the behaviours of the husbands. Just about 10 percent of the wives witnessed physical violence against their mothers while growing-up. The top two controlling issues of the husband over the wife are the husbands being jealous when the wife talks with other men (56.9 per cent) and the husband wanting to know where the wife is (38.7 per cent).

Table 3: Combinations of Intimate Partner Violence(IPV) Experienced in Monogamous Marital union

	Percentage
Any Intimate partner violence (IPV)	24.0
Any Intimate Partner Psychological/Emotional violence against wife	18.3
Any Intimate Partner Physical violence	14.1
Any Intimate Partner Sexual Violence	4.8
Number of Violence experienced	
None	76.0
Any 1	13.2
Any 2	8.5
All 3	2.3
<b>Combinations of Violence<sup>1</sup></b>	
Emotional Violence only	33.5
Sexual violence only	2.9
Physical violence only	18.6
Emotional and Sexual violence only	5.0
Emotional and Physical violence only	28.1
Sexual and Physical violence only	2.2
Emotional, Sexual, and Physical violence	9.7
<b>Wife perpetrated Physical violence against Husband</b>	
Within last 12 months	1.3
Ever in marital union	1.8
Number of Couples	5,531

Source: NDHS, 2013

There is at least an incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV) in the last 12 months preceding the survey in 24 per cent of the monogamous unions (Table 3). Psychological/Emotional violence is the highest form of intimate partner violence in monogamous unions in Nigeria. Some of the women experienced more than one intimate partner violence. An examination of the combinations of intimate partner violence experienced show that about one-third of all that experienced any intimate partner violence, experienced emotional violence only. More than a quarter of the women that experienced any IPV, experienced emotional and physical violence in the last 12 months preceding the survey. While at least 14 percent of the wives in monogamous unions in Nigeria experienced any physical violence in the last 12 months preceding the survey, only 1.3 per cent of the wives perpetrated physical violence against their husbands.

#### Prevalence of Sexual violence by Background Characteristics of the Respondents

The results in Table 4 show that the prevalence of intimate partner violence cuts across the various age groups but highest among husbands who are age 30-39years and women who are 25-34years. The age of the husband or wife have significant effects on incidence of intimate partner violence in marital unions. The level of education of the husband and wife have significant effect on the incidence of IPV in marital unions. Husbands with secondary level of education are most likely to perpetrate IPV against their wives, while wives without formal education are most prone to IPV in their marriage. Religion have significant effect on the incidence of IPV, and the incidence of IPV is highest amongst Other Christians, this may be

<sup>1</sup> Applies to only those that experienced any form of Intimate partner violence



Table 4: Incidence of Intimate partner violence in Monogamous Unions by Selected characteristics of Husband and wife

	Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence in Marital Union			p-value
	None	Yes	Total	
<b>Age of Husband</b>				
15-19	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.008
20-24	5.7	4.1	5.3	
25-29	17.0	16.5	16.9	
30-34	22.8	21.7	22.5	
35-39	22.4	23.7	22.7	
40-44	16.6	20.3	17.5	
45-49	15.2	13.6	14.8	
Mean Age ( <i>in Years</i> )	35.11	35.72	35.26	
<b>Age of Wife</b>				
15-19	12.6	7.1	11.3	0.000
20-24	21.7	18.7	21.0	
25-29	27.3	29.6	27.8	
30-34	18.1	22.1	19.1	
35-39	12.9	14.8	13.4	
40-44	5.7	6.3	5.8	
45-49	1.6	1.4	1.6	
Mean Age ( <i>in Years</i> )	27.00	28.78	27.96	
<b>Education level attained by Husband</b>				
No Education	30.8	16.7	27.4	0.000
Primary	19.7	24.9	21.0	
Secondary	32.4	43.6	35.0	
Higher	17.1	14.8	16.6	
<b>Education level attained by Wife</b>				
No Education	42.4	25.1	38.2	0.000
Primary	17.2	26.8	19.5	
Secondary	30.1	40.9	32.7	
Higher	10.3	7.2	9.6	
<b>Religion of Husband</b>				
Catholic	7.2	14.7	9.0	0.000
Other Christian	33.4	50.3	37.5	
Islam	58.3	33.1	52.2	
Traditionalists	1.1	1.8	1.2	
Others	0.0	0.2	0.1	
<b>Religion of Wife</b>				
Catholic	6.7	12.8	8.1	0.000
Other Christian	34.5	53.8	39.1	
Islam	58.0	32.4	51.9	
Traditionalists	0.8	1.1	0.9	
Others	0.0	0.0	0.0	
<b>Number of Times Wife has been Married</b>				
Once	94.7	91.3	93.9	0.000
More than once	5.3	8.7	6.1	
<b>Number of Times Husband has been Married</b>				
Once	89.5	86.0	88.7	0.001
More than once	10.5	14.0	11.3	
<b>Employment status of Husband</b>				
Not working	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.494
Working	98.6	98.6	98.6	
Not stated	0.4	0.2	0.4	

	Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence in Marital Union			p-value
	None	Yes	Total	
<b>Employment status of Wife</b>				
Not working	33.6	23.1	31.1	0.000
Working	66.1	76.0	68.5	
Not stated	0.3	0.8	0.4	
<b>Husband's use of alcohol</b>				
No	85.8	62.6	80.2	0.000
Yes	14.2	37.4	19.8	
<b>Husband's fidelity to wife in last 12 months</b>				
Not faithful	99.9	100.0	99.9	1.000
Faithful to partner	0.1	0.0	0.1	
<b>Wife's fidelity to Husband in last 12 months</b>				
Not faithful	4.6	7.0	5.2	0.01
Faithful to partner	95.4	93.0	94.8	
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	
<b>Number of couples</b>	4,204	1,327	5,531	

Source: NDHS, 2013

because the focus of the paper is on monogamous unions. Incidence of intimate partner violence is higher among couples in their first marriage. The work status of the husband does not have any significant effect on the incidence of intimate partner violence in monogamous unions. The same does not hold for the work status of the wives, at least three-quarters of working women will experience IPV in their marital unions. The use of alcohol by the husband is likely to pre-dispose a wife to the incidence of IPV in marital unions. Though not significant all wives in unions in which their husbands were not faithful to them in the last 12 months preceding the survey experienced at least an IPV. Wives who have not been faithful to their husbands are significantly likely to experience an IPV in their marital unions.

The results in Table 5 show the relationships between couple characteristics and the incidence of intimate partner violence in monogamous unions. There is a higher incidence of IPV among couples residing in the rural areas, though not statistically significant. Incidence of IPV in monogamous marital unions is highest in the North-east geopolitical zone and lowest in the South-east geopolitical zone. The incidence of intimate partner violence varies significantly across the wealth quintiles. Women in unions where either the couple have the same level of education or the husband is more educated statistically predisposes women in such marital unions to IPV.

Table 5: Couple Characteristics by Incidence of Sexual violence in Marital union

	Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence in Marital Union		Total	p-value
	None	Yes		
<b>Place of Residence</b>				
Urban	37.5	38.8	37.8	0.381
Rural	62.5	61.2	62.2	
<b>Geopolitical zone</b>				
North-Central	16.4	19.9	17.2	0.000
North-East	15.9	26.5	18.4	
North-West	32.9	11.5	27.8	
South-East	6.8	8.1	7.1	
South-South	12.7	18.4	14.0	
South-West	15.4	15.7	15.5	
<b>Wealth Quintile</b>				
Poorest	20.3	14.3	18.9	0.000
Poorer	19.9	20.5	20.0	
Middle	16.8	19.1	17.4	
Richer	19.1	24.0	20.3	
Richest	23.8	22.1	23.4	



	Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence in Marital Union		Total	p-value
	None	Yes		
<b>Education disparity between Couple</b>				
Both no education	27.7	13.9	24.4	0.000
Both have same level of education	32.0	41.7	34.3	
Wife more educated than Husband	10.7	12.6	11.1	
Husband more educated than wife	29.6	31.9	30.1	
<b>Husband-Wife Age difference</b>				
Wife older than husband	1.9	2.6	2.1	0.008
Husband 0-4yrs older than wife	24.8	28.6	25.7	
Husband 5-9yrs older than wife	42.9	42.3	42.8	
Husband 10-14yrs older than wife	22.4	19.2	21.6	
Husband at least 15yrs older than wife	8.0	7.3	7.8	
<b>Mutual fidelity to partner in last 12 months</b>				
Not faithful	99.9	100.0	99.9	1.000
Faithful to partner	0.1	0.0	0.1	
Wife witnessing father ever beating her mother	6.5	22.7	10.4	0.000
<b>Controlling issues</b>				
Husband jealous if wife talks with other men	51.8	73.9	56.9	0.000
Husband accuses wife of unfaithfulness	4.5	22.1	8.7	0.000
Husband does not permit wife to meet female friends	6.6	22.1	10.3	0.000
Husband tries to limit wife's contact with family	4.0	13.5	6.2	0.000
Husband insists on knowing where wife is	32.4	59.6	38.7	0.000
Median Number of controlling issues by husband	1.00	2.00	1.00	0.000
Number of Couples	4,204	1,327	5,531	

Source: NDHS, 2013

Table 6: Attitude to Wife beating by Incidence of Sexual violence in Marital union

	Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence in Marital Union		Total	p-value
	None	Yes		
<b>Husband's attitude to wife beating</b>				
Wife goes out without telling husband	12.6	15.5	13.3	0.016
Wife neglects the children	12.1	16.0	13.1	0.001
Wife argues with husband	12.1	15.7	12.9	0.003
Wife refuses to have sex with husband	12.3	10.4	11.8	0.093
Wife burns food	7.0	9.3	7.5	0.020
<b>Wife's attitude to wife beating</b>				
Wife goes out without telling husband	26.0	32.3	27.5	0.000
Wife neglects the children	24.4	33.3	26.5	0.000
Wife argues with husband	20.7	26.2	21.9	0.000
Wife refuses to have sex with husband	20.5	24.5	21.4	0.008
Wife burns food	15.7	14.3	15.3	0.217
Number of Couples	4,204	1,327	5,531	

Source: NDHS, 2013

Spousal age difference has significant effect on the incidence of IPV in monogamous marital unions. A woman who witnesses her father beating the mother is significantly likely to experience IPV in her marriage. There is incidence of IPV violence in about 74 per cent of marital unions in which the husband feels jealous when the wife talks with other men. Similarly, there is intimate partner violence in 60 per cent of the marriages in which the husband always wants to know where his wife is at any point in time. In marital unions where there is the incidence of sexual violence the median number of controlling issues is 2 while it is 1 in marital unions where there is no sexual violence.

Core to the perpetuation of wife beating are the attitudes that men and women have, even as they enter marriage (Table 6). A wife whose husband believes that the husband is justified in beating his wife when the wife neglects the children, when she argues with the husband and the wife goes out without telling her husband are the

top three attitudes that a woman has in justifying wife beating. The pattern is similar for the attitudes of wives about wife beating,

### Factors Enhancing Sexual Violence

Logistic regression<sup>1</sup> is used to determine the factors that have effect on a woman's risk of experiencing intimate partner violence in a monogamous marital union. The results of the Logistic regression (Table 7) show that women age above 40 years have higher odds of experiencing intimate partner sexual violence relative to those below 25 years. While women whose husbands are between 45-49 years are significantly 45 per cent less likely to experience intimate partner violence relative to those below 25 years. The level of education of the husband and wife does not significantly affect the incidence of IPV, however, wives with some level of tertiary/higher education are about 71 percent less likely to experience IPV. It is only the religion of the wife that have significant effect on the incidence of IPV. Women who are either Catholics or Other Christians are at least one and seven-tenth times as likely to experience intimate partner violence relative to wives who belong to the Islamic faith. The number of times a woman has been married does not have any significant effect on the incidence of IPV in monogamous unions. But wives in union in which the husband has been married more than once are one and two-fifth times as likely to experience IPV relative to those whose husbands have been married.

Table 7: Multivariate Analysis of the Predictors of Sexual Violence in Marital Unions in Nigeria

	Model		95% C.I for Odds Ratio	
	B	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper
<b>Age of Wife</b>				
Below 25 (r )				
25-29	0.43*	1.53	1.17	2.00
30-34	0.78*	2.17	1.49	3.17
35-39	0.91*	2.48	1.48	4.14
40-44	1.09*	2.98	1.53	5.83
45-49	0.98 <sup>+</sup>	2.68	1.06	6.78
<b>Age of Husband</b>				
Below 25 (r )				
25-29	0.26	1.30	0.88	1.92
30-34	-0.13	0.88	0.57	1.38
35-39	-0.23	0.79	0.46	1.35
40-44	-0.43	0.65	0.34	1.23
45-49	-0.80 <sup>+</sup>	0.45	0.21	0.97
<b>Highest Level of Education of Husband</b>				
None (r )				
Primary	0.38	1.46	0.83	2.57
Secondary	0.45	1.58	0.78	3.18
Higher	0.22	1.24	0.51	3.05
<b>Highest Level of Education of Wife</b>				
None (r )				
Primary	0.19	1.21	0.87	1.68
Secondary	0.10	1.11	0.67	1.83
Higher	-0.35	0.71	0.33	1.54
<b>Religion of Husband</b>				
Islam (r )				
Catholic	0.51	1.67	0.98	2.83
Other Christian	0.13	1.14	0.71	1.84
Others	0.46	1.58	0.74	3.39
<b>Religion of Wife</b>				
Islam (r )				
Catholic	0.53 <sup>+</sup>	1.71	0.99	2.93
Other Christian	0.60*	1.83	1.14	2.93
Others	0.16	1.18	0.49	2.80

<sup>1</sup> The Logistic regression is useful for situations in which one wants to be able to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic or outcome based on values of a set of predictor variables.

	Model		95% C.I for Odds Ratio	
	B	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper
<b>Times Married by wife</b>				
Once (r )				
More than once	0.18	1.19	0.88	1.61
<b>Times Married by Husband</b>				
Once (r )				
More than once	0.33*	1.40	1.11	1.76
<b>Employment Status of Wife</b>				
Not working	-0.25*	0.78	0.65	0.93
Working (r )				
<b>Husband use alcohol</b>				
No (r )				
Yes	0.70*	2.02	1.67	2.44
<b>Wife's fidelity to Husband in last 12 months</b>				
Not faithful	-0.05	0.95	0.70	1.30
Faithful to partner (r )				
<b>Witness father ever beat her mother</b>				
Yes	0.85*	2.33	1.88	2.89
No (r )				
<b>Geopolitical zone</b>				
North-Central	0.73*	2.08	1.49	2.90
North-East	1.27*	3.56	2.44	5.18
North-West	0.14	1.15	0.79	1.69
South-East (r )				
South-South	0.18	1.19	0.85	1.67
South-West	0.47*	1.60	1.14	2.25
<b>Wealth Quintile</b>				
Poorest	0.11	1.11	0.79	1.57
Poorer	0.27	1.31	0.98	1.77
Middle	0.20	1.22	0.94	1.57
Richer	0.23 <sup>+</sup>	1.26	1.01	1.57
Richest (r )				
<b>Education disparity between Couple</b>				
Both no education	0.11	1.12	0.61	2.06
Both have same level of education (r )				
Wife more educated than Husband	0.03	1.03	0.71	1.50
Husband more educated than wife	0.01	1.01	0.71	1.44
<b>Husband-Wife Age difference</b>				
Wife older than husband	-0.86 <sup>+</sup>	0.42	0.19	0.94
Husband 0-4yrs older than wife	-0.59 <sup>+</sup>	0.55	0.33	0.93
Husband 5-9yrs older than wife	-0.42 <sup>+</sup>	0.66	0.43	1.00
Husband 10-14yrs older than wife	-0.25	0.78	0.55	1.11
Husband at least 15yrs older than wife				
<b>Husband jealous if wife talks with other men</b>				
Yes	0.62*	1.86	1.56	2.21
No (r )				
<b>Husband accuses wife of unfaithfulness</b>				
Yes	1.05*	2.87	2.27	3.63
No (r )				
<b>Husband does not permit wife to meet female friends</b>				
Yes	0.43*	1.53	1.21	1.94
No (r )				
<b>Husband tries to limit wife's contact with family</b>				
Yes	0.36 <sup>+</sup>	1.43	1.06	1.93
No (r )				

	Model		95% C.I for Odds Ratio	
	B	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper
<b>Husband insists on knowing where wife is</b>				
Yes	0.61*	1.84	1.57	2.16
No (r )				
<b>Wife goes out without telling husband- Justification for wife beating by husband</b>				
Yes	0.02	1.02	0.77	1.35
No (r )				
<b>Wife neglects the children- Justification for wife beating by husband</b>				
Yes	0.04	1.04	0.77	1.39
No (r )				
<b>Wife argues with husband- Justification for wife beating by husband</b>				
Yes	0.44*	1.56	1.17	2.07
No (r )				
<b>Wife refuses to have sex with husband- Justification for wife beating by husband</b>				
Yes	-0.44 <sup>+</sup>	0.65	0.47	0.88
No (r )				
<b>Wife burns food- Justification for wife beating by husband</b>				
Yes	-0.03	0.97	0.68	1.40
No (r )				
<b>Wife goes out without telling husband- Justification for wife beating by Wife</b>				
Yes	-0.09	0.91	0.72	1.16
No				
<b>Wife neglects the children- Justification for wife beating by Wife</b>				
Yes	0.24	1.27	0.99	1.64
No				
<b>Wife argues with husband- Justification for wife beating by Wife</b>				
Yes	0.11	1.12	0.86	1.47
No				
<b>Wife refuses to have sex with husband- Justification for wife beating by Wife</b>				
Yes	0.30 <sup>+</sup>	1.35	1.04	1.75
No				
<b>Wife burns food- Justification for wife beating by Wife</b>				
Yes	-0.82*	0.44	0.33	0.59
No				
Constant	-3.65*	0.03		
-2 Log likelihood		4750.86		
Nagelkerke R square		0.323		
Number of Couples		5531		
Classification		80.7		

Source: NDHS, 2013

+ p <0.05; \* p <0.01

Wives that are not working are significantly 78 per cent less likely to experience IPV in their marital unions relative to those working. This may be because women who are not working may be economically dependent on their husbands for family and personal needs. Wives whose husbands uses alcohol are significantly at least twice as likely to experience IPV relative to women whose husbands do not use alcohol. Women who witnessed her father beating the mother are significantly about two and one third times as likely to experience sexual violence in their marriage relative to those who never witnessed physical violence against their mothers while growing-up.

Married women resident in the North-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria are significantly about three and a half

times more likely to experience IPV in their marriages relative to married women resident in the South-east geopolitical zone. Similarly, the married women resident in the North-central and South-west geopolitical zone are respectively about twice and 1.6 times as likely to experience IPV relative to their counterparts in the South-east geopolitical zone. Married women whose households are in the richer wealth quintile are significantly at least one and a quarter times as likely to experience IPV in their marriages relative to those whose households are in the richest quintile. Women in the poorest households have the lowest odds of experiencing IPV. Disparity in education between husband and wife does not have any significant effect on the incidence of IPV in monogamous unions. A smaller age difference between husband and wife significantly reduces the likelihood of the woman experiencing any IPV in such a monogamous union.

In terms of the controlling issues, all the five issues in this study have significant effect on the likelihood of incidence of intimate partner violence in a marital union. Wives whose husbands accuse them of unfaithfulness are significantly about three times more likely to experience any IPV relative to those not accused of unfaithfulness by their husbands. Married women in a union in which the husband feels jealous when she is talking to another male are significantly one and four-fifth times as likely to experience IPV relative to the women whose husbands are not jealous of them talking to another male. A similar pattern holds for women in monogamous unions in which their husbands want to always know where she is relative to those that the husbands are not too bothered about where their wives may be. Women in marital unions in which their husbands do not permit them to meet their female friends are significantly one and a half times as likely to experience sexual violence relative to the women whose husbands allow them to meet their female friends.

On attitude to wife beating, women whose husbands see arguments by wife as a basis for beating her are about one and a half times as likely to experience any intimate partner violence relative to those in unions in which the husband does not regard argument by a wife as justification for wife beating. Women in monogamous unions in which the husband regards wife's refusal to have sex with their husbands are 65 percent less likely to experience any IPV relative to those in unions in which the husband do not regard refusal of sex as basis for wife beating.

The situation of the attitude of women to wife beating is a bit worrisome, in that women who think a husband is justified in beating his wife when she refuses him sex are at least one and one-third times as likely to experience IPV relative to women in monogamous unions who do not think that a husband is justified in beating the wife, just because she refuses her husband sex.

#### **4.Limitations**

The experience of intimate partner violence was measured in the context of the 12 months before the survey and not for the life time of the respondents. The fact that a woman did not experience any intimate partner violence in the past 12 months does not imply that such a woman has never experienced any acts of intimate partner violence, or that she is precluded from experiencing any IPV in the future. Also, like in many studies of this nature, the study may not have accurately measured the number of women who have been abused, but rather the number of women who are willing to disclose abuse. The fact that the data for this study are cross-sectional, temporal relationship between sexual violence and a covariate measuring an event that clearly predates its occurrence cannot be established. Also, the cross-sectional design of the data required relying on respondents' ability to recall violent experiences and on respondents' willingness to disclose this information.

#### **5.Conclusions**

The findings confirm the fact that IPV cuts across age, status, and education as in many other places. There is at least an IPV in about 24 per cent of the monogamous unions. The high incidence of IPV in monogamous marital unions is highest in the North-east geopolitical zone brings to the fore the likelihood that the insurgency in the area may be permeating the fabrics of the community.

IPV is not limited to urban areas, it is even higher among those resident in the rural areas. Wives that are not working are significantly less likely to experience IPV in their marital unions relative to those working. This may be because women who are not working may be economically dependent on their husbands for family and personal needs. Wives whose husbands use alcohol are significantly at least twice as likely to experience IPV relative to women whose husbands do not use alcohol. The following are statistically significant predictors IPV in monogamous unions, namely: the age of the wife couple, number of times a husband has been married, the employment status of the wife, witnessing of physical violence between parents. The results show that husbands still exert many controlling issues over their wives, this again has implications for the rights of women in a patriarchal society like Nigeria.

#### **6.Recommendations**

The focus of the recommendations is the prevention of the incidence of intimate partner violence. The issue must be tackled at different levels. The intervention to mitigate the incidence of intimate partner violence must not be limited to the urban areas, the rural areas must be strategically focussed upon. It is pertinent for men to be targeted

as more emphasis are placed on addressing the root causes of their controlling behaviours as well as the issue of alcohol use. There is also the need to build the capacity of young girls and adolescents to have appropriate negotiating and communication skills before entry into the marriage institutions. Patriarchy is at the heart of the controlling behaviours of husbands as such, there should be public awareness and enlightenment campaigns to target the entire communities to encourage respect for the right of every citizen.

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