

Topic: Regional differences in factors of gender-based violence among young mothers (15-24) in Nigeria.

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Background: Gender-based violence (GBV) includes physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm inflicted on a person because of their gender. Age 15-24 falls mostly within adolescence which represents a time when they are still largely unable to make safe, consensual, and voluntary decisions about marriage, sexual relations and reproduction, their young age and lack of experience with romantic relationships can create unequal gender-power relations putting them at risk of violence. There is a paucity of data on regional differences in experience of GBV among young mothers. The objectives of this study were to determine the regional differences in age at first experience of GBV among young mothers in Nigeria and to determine the regional differences in factors of gender-based violence experience among young mothers in Nigeria.

Main questions:

The questions asked by this study were 1. what is the regional difference in age at first experience of GBV? 2. what are the regional differences in factors of GBV among young mothers in Nigeria?

Methodology:

The study is a secondary data analysis of dataset from the Nigeria Demographic and Health survey conducted in 2018. Individual who begun childbearing and were (15-24) years old were included in the sample. Information about the age of experience of gender-based violence was extracted and cross tabulated by region and other socio demographic characteristic. Data was analysed using stata v17 software (StataCorp, College Station, TX USA). Three levels of statistical analysis were applied. The first level consisted of describing the characteristics of the included sample using absolute numbers and percentages of the characteristics of young mothers. The second level was the comparison of the region and age at first experience of GBV using Pearson's Chi-squared test, this was followed up with multilevel multivariable logistic regression model for type of violence experienced.

Result/Key findings:

Total sample of young mothers included in the study was 5,399, mean age of participants was 20.99 ± 2.09 , majority of participants were 20-24 years old (77.90%), Majority had their first child between 15-19 (71.79%), Majority experienced violence for the first time within 12 months of marriage (55.26%). Proportion of experience emotional, sexual, less physical, and severe physical violence (31.67%, 9.28%, 18.29% and 8.14%). More women from the south experienced violence before marriage than women from the north, however women from the north experienced more violence overall. Also, women from the Northeast experienced more emotional and sexual violence than other region, while women from the Southwest experienced more physical violence. The odds of experiencing sexual violence in the northeast was twice as high as the northwest (AOR=1.65, P-Value at 95%=0.000, CI=1.1420-2.1637)

Knowledge contribution:

The disaggregated regional type and proportion of violence experienced by young mothers contributes to the pool of data required for effective contextual GBV intervention for young mothers in Northern and Southern Nigeria and presents an opportunity for multisectoral focus of efforts on the most yielding interventions to mitigate GBV as a national public health priority.