



Partner violence and associated factors among pregnant women in Nkangala district, South Africa

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Outline

- Background
- Aims & Objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- Limitations
- Conclusion
- References

Background

- Intimate partner violence (IPV) - actual or threatened physical, sexual, psychological, & emotional abuse by current or former partners - is a global public health concern¹.
- IPV against women can lead to negative mental & physical health consequences.
 - mental disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorders;
 - & infectious diseases such as HIV infection & other STIs.^{6,7,8,9}

Background

- Various studies have shown that IPV is the most common form of violence against women worldwide.^{3,4,5}
- As many as 4% to 8% of all pregnant women are victims of IPV.⁸
- IPV found to be prevalent during pregnancy by studies conducted in 19 countries. Its prevalence ranged from 2% in Australia, Denmark, Cambodia & Phillipines to 13.5% in Uganda.¹⁰

Background

- SA has one of the highest rates of violence against women in the world, with over 190 000 cases of crimes against women aged 18 and older reported to police in 2010/2011.²
- 1 in 3 SA women attending antenatal clinics were found to have experienced physical or sexual abuse in the previous year from a partner.¹¹
- Among pregnant women attending primary care services in Mpumalanga, 14% had experienced physical abuse by their partner in the past 12 months.¹²
- Still, true extent of violence in SA is unknown, due to underreporting of abuse cases

Background

IPV has been linked to

- HIV risk^{13,14}
- HIV infection¹¹
- Increased substance & drug use^{15,16}
- Socio-demographic factors^{14,17}

Aim & Objectives

- This study seeks to determine the prevalence of physical partner violence and associated factors among pregnant women in Nkangala district .

Objectives

- Use secondary data to determine:
 - Proportion of pregnant women with IPV
 - Associations between IPV and different characteristics, e.g. sociodemographic, reproductive health related, sexual behaviour, etc

Methods

- A cross-sectional study
- 1502 pregnant women with a mean gestational age of 6.5.
- Data was collected from April to June 2010 at primary healthcare facilities in Nkangala district.
- Ethical approval was obtained from HSRC REC & health authorities in Mpumalanga province.

Procedure

- Study participants who were 18 years & older who have come for the second antenatal care visit were eligible to participate in the study.
- A team of trained research assistants worked at the facilities daily to conduct the interviews until the desired sample was reached.
- The interview were conducted mainly in Zulu & took 45 minutes to complete.
- A written informed consent was obtained from all the participants.
- The interviews were conducted in a private room offered by the health care professional.

Measures

- A structured questionnaire containing sections on:
 - demographic details,
 - reproductive health related characteristics,
 - HIV testing history,
 - sexual risk,
 - alcohol use,
 - Kessler Psychological Distress Scale
 - & abuse history,
- was used to collect information from the pregnant women.

Measures

Dependant variable

- Physical partner violence in the past 6 months

“Have you experienced physical abuse by your partner/husband in the past 6 months?” By physical abuse we mean whether you were hit, slapped, kicked, bit, pushed, shoved, or physically hurt you in another way by their partner.

Independent variables (5 groups)

- Socio-demographic characteristics
age, marital status, & educational level
- Reproductive health related characteristics
gestational age, planned/unplanned pregnancy, & number of own (biological) children

Measures

- Sexual behaviour characteristics

condom use in the past 3 months, number of casual partners in the past 3 months, number of sexual partners in the past 12 months, experience of STIs in the past 12 months, alcohol use in the past month

- Partner characteristics

HIV status of partner, partner violence under alcohol influence, concern that partner drinks too much

- Mental health characteristic

experience of symptoms of psychological distress

Analyses

- SPSS version 19.0 was used.
- Descriptive data analysis was conducted to determine sample characteristics & also to describe the types of abuse.
- A bivariate analysis was done to determine whether there were statistically significant associations between each independent factor & physical partner violence in the past 6 months.
- Logistic regression was used to model physical partner violence in the past 6 months on all independent factors which were significant in the bivariate analysis.
- A p -value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant for all analyses

Results: *Sample Description*

Characteristic	N=1502 n (%)
18-24 yrs of age	636 (42.7)
25-29 yrs of age	417 (27.8)
Single/Divorced/Separated/Widowed	1031 (69.9)
Married	444 (30.1)
Less than grade 12	832 (55.6)
Grade 12 or more	665 (44.4)
Gestational age: up to 3 months	64 (4.7)
4 to 6 months	576 (42.1)
7 to 9 month	727 (53.2)
1 to 3 children	870 (59.5)
4 or more children	75 (5.1)

Results: *Sample Description*

Characteristic	n (%)
Pregnancy, Not planned	824 (55.2)
HIV positive	278 (19.3)
Partner HIV positive	77 (12.6)
Had other STIs in the past 12 months	254 (17.3)
Alcohol use in the past month	93 (6.5)
Concerned that partner drinks too much	344 (38.8)
Partner violence under the influence of alcohol	118 (24.4)

Results: *Sample Description*

Characteristic	n (%)
Condom use in the past 3 months	114 (58.5)
>1 sexual partners in the past 12 months	155 (10.9)
Had casual partner in past 3 months	107 (7.6)
Severe psychological distress	168 (12.3)

Experience of different forms of partner violence

Abuse Item(s)	N (%)
Experience of physical partner violence in the past 6 months	123 (8.5)
Sexual Abuse Partner used force, like hitting, holding you down, or using a weapon to make you have sex	19 (1.3)
Emotional Abuse Partner put you down with words, emotionally hurt or made you feel afraid	103 (7.1)



Factors associated with physical partner violence

Results: *Bivariate Analysis*

Factors	Unadjusted OR (95% CI)	P-value
Grade 12 or more vs. less than Grade 12	0.67 (0.46 – 0.99)	0.043
Married... vs. Single...	0.94 (0.62 – 9.41)	0.749

Results: *Bivariate Analysis*

Factors	Unadjusted OR (95% CI)	P-value
≥5 months preg. vs. < 5 months preg.	1.85 (0.88 – 3.88)	0.103
Pregnancy planned vs. Not planned	1.25 (0.85 – 1.83)	0.250
No Children (Ref)		
1 to 3 children	1.62 (1.03 – 2.54)	0.035
4 or more children	4.48 (2.29 – 8.76)	0.000

Results: *Bivariate Analysis*

Factors	Unadjusted OR (95% CI)	P-value
Condom use in the past 3 months	2.14 (0.74 - 6.20)	0.162
> One sexual partners in the past 12 months	1.79 (1.08 - 2.97)	0.023
Had casual partner in past 3 months	2.56 (1.22 - 3.82)	0.008
Partner HIV positive	1.50 (0.70 - 3.22)	0.295
Had STIs (other than HIV) in the past 12 months	2.91 (1.94 - 4.35)	0.000
HIV positive vs. negative	1.56 (1.01 - 2.40)	0.046
Concerned that partner drinks too much	4.21 (2.66 - 6.66)	0.000
Alcohol use in past month	4.07 (2.41 - 6.87)	0.000
Severe psychological distress	2.57 (1.60 - 4.14)	0.000

Results: *Logistic regression model*

Factors	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	P-value
Less than Grade 12 vs. Grade 12 or more	1.26 (0.70 – 2.24)	0.440
No Children (Ref)		
1 to 3 children	2.24 (1.16 – 4.35)	0.017
4 or more children	8.00 (2.92 – 21.96)	0.000
More than one partners in the past 12 months	1.49 (0.72 – 3.06)	0.281
Had casual partner in past 3 months	0.97 (0.40 – 2.36)	0.941
Had STIs (other than HIV) in the past 12 months	1.95 (1.07 - 3.58)	0.030
Concerned that partner drinks too much	4.50 (2.49 – 8.00)	0.000
Severe psychological distress	2.02 (1.06 – 3.85)	0.032

Discussion

- Almost 9% of the pregnant women in this study reported experience of violence in the past 6 months by their intimate partner.
- Our most interesting finding was the fact that having (one to three and four or more) children was associated with more experience of physical partner violence.
- All the other valid findings in this study were consistent with the findings from other studies.

Limitations

- This is a cross-sectional study and the focus was on a specific sample, therefore generalisations cannot be made on the basis of these results.
- Additionally, the measures used were all by self report, so there is a possibility of a degree of biased reporting.

Conclusion

- Despite the few reported responses of abuse by pregnant women in this survey, these numbers warrant a need for appropriate interventions in order to prevent & reduce sexual abuse among pregnant women in SA.
- Factors identified as associated with partner violence can be taken into consideration in partner violence interventions
- All pregnant women visiting antenatal health care facilities in SA need to be screened for IPV so as to enable implementation of appropriate interventions among those abused.

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Thank You!