

Introduction

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a major health issue that primarily affects women across the different world regions. The World Health Organization, reports that slightly less than one-third (31%) of women aged 15 and older have experienced violence at some point in their lives (WHO, 2021). The problem appears to be significantly worse in Sub-Saharan Africa, with estimates ranging from 36% to 45% (Ahinkorah, 2021; McClintock et al., 2021). Emotional and physical IPV are more prevalent than sexual violence when it comes to IPV and therefore they warrant more attention and resources than sexual violence (Merrill et al. 2020; Seidu et al. 2021).

Although previous studies have examined the risk factors for IPV in the Sub-Saharan region, few have identified factors where an individual experiences both physical and emotional violence simultaneously, reported as dual IPV in the study. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to assess the prevalence of dual IPV and to identify its associated factors in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The findings of this study can be valuable for shaping policies and programs to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence in the countries under study.

Gender and Power framework highlights how social norms, gender-based division of labour, and power imbalances shape the social relationships and individual experiences in a society (Maharaj, 1995). This framework can therefore provide insights into the prevalence of IPV. Social norms supporting IPV have been documented in different countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where the incidence of IPV is high (Alabi & Ramsden, 2021; Annan et al., 2021). These norms promote an environment where IPV continue to thrive, as perpetrators often exploit the normalisation of such violence, which in turn can lead to underreporting of IPV incidents.

Additionally, the presence of deeply ingrained patriarchal beliefs within society often results in the unequal distribution of power based on gender, placing women in a subordinate position to men (Hadi, 2017). This power dynamic leads to an increased inclination for men to exert control over women, consequently elevating the likelihood of IPV (McClintock et al., 2021). Specifically, in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, a notable proportion of men exhibit behaviors geared towards exerting dominance over women, and these behaviors have been consistently tied to higher rates of IPV (McClintock et al., 2021).

Data and methods

This is a cross-sectional quantitative study using secondary data from the most recent Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) conducted in Zimbabwe (2015) and Zambia (2018). The data on IPV is collected from a subset of women who have never married but currently have or have had an intimate partner, as well as from women who were ever married. Detailed questions on this topic are discussed later in this paper along with other variables in the study. The respondents were 11779 women aged 15–54.

Statistical analysis

The data was processed using Stata 17. The analysis used the Chi-square statistics to examine the association between the dependent and the various predictor variables at the bivariate level. Furthermore, multinomial logistic regression was employed at the multivariate level to estimate the relative risk ratio (RRR) of experiencing any of the three outcomes relative to experiencing none. The method is used when the outcome variable has two or more categories and was relevant in this case because the individual could have experienced either physical, or emotional violence, or both. The cut-off point for the significance level was 0.05.

Dependent variable

The measurements of physical and emotional violence were based on the following:

Physical violence was measured based on the response to the following questions:

Have you ever been (a) ever been pushed, shook or had something thrown by husband/partner; (b) Ever been slapped by your husband/partner ;(c) Ever been punched with a fist or hit by something harmful by your husband/partner; (d)Ever been kicked or dragged by husband/partner; (e) Ever been strangled or burnt by husband/partner (f) Ever been attacked with a knife, gun or other weapon by husband/partner; (g) Ever had arm twisted or hair pulled by husband/partner

Emotional violence, on the other hand, was based on the following questions: *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 you care about? (c) Insult you or make you feel bad about yourself?*

The outcome variable in the study was then created with four categories, coded “0” when the respondent did not experience either emotional or physical; “1” for reporting physical, but not emotional violence; “2” when the respondent experienced only emotional violence and “3” when both emotional and physical were reported.

Results

Table 3 shows the relative risk ratios (RRRs) for experiencing emotional, physical, and dual IPV relative to not experiencing none. In comparison to respondents in Zimbabwe, those in Zambia were 1.47 (CI:1.08-2.00) more likely to have experienced emotional violence but the risk of dual violence was lower by 25% (RRR=0.75, CI: 0.61-1.00). In addition, the risk of experiencing dual IPV increased by 1.27 (CI:1.07-1.51) among those 25–34 years. Furthermore, the risk for emotional (RRR=0.64, CI:0.50-0.81) and dual IPV (RRR=0.72, CI:0.58-0.90) decreased among women staying in urban areas relative to those in rural areas. Furthermore, the risk for dual violence was two-fold higher (RRR=2.00, CI: 1.55-2.58) for women who were previously in a union compared to those who were still in a relationship.

Having a higher level of education was associated with lower levels of violence in all three cases.

The risk for physical violence among those with secondary and tertiary levels of education was reduced by 0.69 (CI: 50-96) and 0.38 (CI: 23-64) respectively while for emotional violence it was decreased by 0.63 (CI: 0.45-0.88) and 0.53 (CI: 0.32-0.83) for both levels of education. Dual violence was only significant at the tertiary level and the risk was lower by 39% (RRR= 0.61, CI: 41-92). Concerning religious affiliation, women of the Catholic faith had a lower risk (RRR=0.60, CI: 0.41-0.92) compared to those not affiliated with any religion. The risk among other faiths was not statistically significant. Likewise, being employed increased the risk of all types of violence; emotional violence had the highest risk increasing by 1.30 (CI:1.10-1.54) for this category of women followed by the risk of 1.29 (CI: 1.10-1.50) for dual violence.

Coming from a household with a higher wealth index was associated with lower risk for emotional (RRR=0.73, CI:0.56-0.98) and dual IPV (RRR=0.75, CI:0.58-0.96) relative to women from households with poor wealth index. There were differences among those from households led by males and females.

Furthermore, there was a strong correlation between the individual's support for IPV and the likelihood of experiencing various forms of violence. Participants who believed that wife-beating was justifiable for any reasons were 53% (RRR=1.53, CI: 1.31-1.77) and 23% (RRR=1.23, CI:1.04-1.48) more likely to have experienced physical and emotional violence respectively while dual violence was elevated by 41% (CI: 1.22-1.64). Additionally, the highest risk was found among those who reported having a partner who displayed some controlling behaviour. The risk for physical was nearly three times more (RRR=2.71, CI: 2.20-3.08) while increasing by 4.2 (CI: 3.33-5.12) and 6.7 (CI: 5.47-8.15) times more for emotional and dual violence respectively compared to those whose partners did not display such behaviour. Additionally, women who reported that their partners drank alcohol had the risk increasing by 2.16 (CI: 1.87-2.50) and 1.8 (CI: 1.56-2.17) for physical and emotional violence respectively. Furthermore, the risk was 3.07 (CI: 2.67-3.53) more likely to have reported dual IPV. Additionally, those who witnessed IPV from their parents were 1.62 (CI:1.39-1.88) and 1.52 (CI:1.28-1.82) more likely to have experienced physical and emotional violence while the risk increased by 1.86 (CI: 1.62-2.12) for dual IPV.

Table 3: Relative-risk ratio estimates for IPV

Variable	Physical	95% CI	Emotion	95% CI	Both	95% CI
Country						
Zimbabwe	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Zambia	0.81	0.64–1.12	1.47*	1.08–2.00	0.75*	0.61–1.00
Age group						
15–24	1.00		1.00		1.00	
25–34	1.17	0.97–1.42	1.20	0.98–1.45	1.27*	1.07–1.51
35–44	0.93	0.73–1.20	1.14	0.89–1.47	1.01	0.88–1.41
45–54	0.99	0.77–1.28	0.96	0.75–1.23	1.04	0.84–1.29
Place of Residence						
Urban	0.81	0.63–1.05	0.64***	0.50–0.81	0.72***	0.58–0.90
Rural	1.00		1.00		1.00	

Relationship status						
In union	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Previously in union	0.92	0.73–1.18	1.16	0.88–1.51	2.00***	1.55–2.58
No of unions						
1	0.59***	0.48–0.73	0.92	0.76–1.13	0.86	0.74–1.06
2 or more	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Educational level						
No education	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Primary	0.78	0.59–1.02	0.66*	0.46–0.95	1.01	0.79–1.28
Secondary	0.69*	0.50–0.96	0.63**	0.45–0.88	0.82	0.63–1.08
Higher	0.38***	0.23–0.64	0.52**	0.32–0.83	0.61*	0.41–0.92
Religious affiliation						
No religion	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Catholic	0.68	0.40–1.14	1.01	0.55–1.86	0.60*	0.37–0.97
Protestant	0.71	0.43–1.18	1.10	0.60–2.01	0.68	0.43–1.09
Pentecostal	0.80	0.51–1.28	1.05	0.58–1.88	0.69	0.44–1.10
Apostolic sect	0.77	0.50–1.18	1.36	0.79–2.32	0.91	0.57–1.44
Other Christians	0.59	0.29–1.18	1.22	0.61–2.45	0.98	0.54–1.78
Other	0.68	0.33–1.40	0.90	0.35–2.32	0.52	0.25–1.07
Employment						
Not working	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Past year	0.95	0.73–1.22	1.08	1.28–1.82	1.28	0.99–1.65
Currently working	1.20*	1.01–1.42	1.30***	1.10–1.54	1.29***	1.10–1.50
Wealth index						
Poorest/Poor	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Middle	0.95	0.78–1.16	0.04	0.85–1.28	0.99	0.82–1.21
Richer/Richest	0.78	0.60–1.03	0.73*	0.56–0.98	0.75*	0.58–0.96
Sex of the head						
Male	1.07	0.89–1.29	0.96	0.79–1.19	0.97	0.82–1.15
Female	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Accept wife-beating.						
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	1.53***	1.31–1.77	1.23*	1.04–1.48	1.41***	1.22–1.64
Controlling behaviour						
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	2.71***	2.20–3.08	4.12***	3.33–5.12	6.67***	5.47–8.15
Partner drinks						
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	2.16***	1.87–2.50	1.84***	1.56–2.17	3.07***	2.67–3.53
Mother ever beaten						
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	1.62***	1.39–1.88	1.52***	1.28–1.82	1.86***	1.62–2.12
Don't know	1.51***	1.18–1.93	1.30	0.93–1.72	1.38**	1.10–1.73
Constant	0.18***	0.07–0.47	0.06***	0.02–0.16	0.11***	0.05–0.24

*** p < 0.005 **p < 0.01 * p < 0.05