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GENDER REVOLUTION AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA: EVIDENCE FROM THE 2024 NIGERIA DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY

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Abstract

The changing character of the traditional roles of the traditional individual in contemporary society has exerted considerable pressure on intimate relationships and predisposed most domestic spheres into veritable theatres for deviations and conflicts. This study examines the nexus between gender revolution and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) among women in Nigeria using data from the 2024 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey. The study engaged two levels of statistical analysis. The study revealed an increase in gender revolution over the last decade in the study area. An inverse significant relationship was established between gender revolution and IPV indicators (p <.005). A positive significant relationship between partners' level of education and experiencing physical violence was affirmed (Primary education odds ratio (OR) = 1.61, CI 1.29-2.01; secondary education OR = 1.51, CI 1.24- 1.84). The study affirmed that both individual and community factors influence the incidence of IPV in the study area. The study concludes that providing interventions that target an increase in women's education and accelerate their participation in the labour force, especially paid work, will increase gender revolution and reduce IPV in the study area.

Keywords: *Intimate partner violence, Gender, Gender revolution, Nigeria*

Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to violent behaviour by a current or former spouse or intimate partner that may result in physical, psychological, or sexual harm (Breiding *et al*., 2015; Garcia-Moreno *et al*., 2013). It remains a major global public health and human rights problem, affecting more than one-third of women worldwide (WHO, 2026; Sardinha *et al*., 2022). IPV includes physical acts such as hitting, slapping, beating, and kicking, alongside psychological abuse, sexual violence, and controlling behaviours

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(WHO, 2013). Global estimates suggest that about 35% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (Anderson *et al*., 2019; Global Health Observatory Repository, 2019; Yakubovich et al., 2018), while one in three women aged 15–49 has been exposed to IPV (WHO, 2026). Among married women, one in five experiences some form of spousal violence (UNICEF, 2022).

Although the struggles associated with gender revolution originated largely in the West, their trajectories have varied across societies. Industrialization and urbanization separated productive and reproductive roles, concentrating men in the public sphere and women in the privatized domestic sphere (Kuznets, 1957; Tilly and Scott, 1978). As men increasingly entered wage labour, education, and politics, women remained primarily responsible for childcare and family life (Walters, 1984). However, demographic change, technological innovation, and feminist challenges to patriarchal institutions gradually expanded women's access to education, paid work, and public participation. By the twentieth century, childcare was no longer necessarily a lifelong full-time role for women (Watkins *et al*., 1987). The gender revolution therefore describes women's movement into the economic public sphere as co-breadwinners and men's movement into the family sphere as co-nurturers. Its anticipated outcome is higher productivity, more egalitarian families, and greater family stability (Goldscheider *et al*., 2015).

Contemporary media and scholarship continue to document young people's rejection of traditional gender identities and the wider appeal of gender equality discourses (The Guardian, 2016; National Geographic, 2017). Although the gender equality agenda became prominent in the 1960s, its realization has unfolded over several generations (Cooke, 2021). While women's political participation and labour-market gains are expected to produce more equitable gender relations (Bargain *et al*., 2019), how gender differences shape IPV perpetration and victimization remain contested (Winstok and Straus, 2016). In Nigeria, progress towards gender equality has been slower in the domestic sphere than in the public sphere (Sullivan *et al*., 2018). Few studies have examined how gender revolution, interpreted through control theory, may reduce IPV-related gender gaps within families using evidence from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). This study therefore investigates the interaction between gender revolution and the transformation of intimate relationships (Goldscheider *et al*., 2015; Sullivan *et al*., 2018; Alejandro and Coralia, 2025).

Specifically, the study asks: (i) whether gender revolution is significantly associated with IPV, particularly physical and sexual violence; (ii) whether community factors influence IPV in the context of gender revolution; and (iii) whether individual factors such as women's autonomy, education, and gender revolution are significantly related to IPV. Given the social consequences of IPV, such analysis is necessary for understanding how intimate partners may be liberated from hegemonic and stereotypical gender norms (Threadgold, 2019; Allen *et al*., 2022). It also clarifies how groups often described as "trailblazers" in changing, more reformist gender practices may be situated within broader shifts in gender relations (Allen *et*

al., 2022). These gaps constitute the central contribution of this article.

Methods

Study Setting and Sample Size

This study used the 2024 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), a nationally representative cross-sectional dataset covering Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The NDHS employed a stratified two-stage cluster sampling design in which enumeration areas served as primary sampling units. In total, 1,400 clusters were selected, comprising 701 urban and 699 rural clusters, followed by the equal-probability selection of 42,000 households. The women's recode dataset was downloaded with permission from ORC Macro/DHS USA, and women's interview records on domestic violence were extracted for analysis.

Variables

Intimate partner violence (IPV), generated from the domestic violence module, served as the outcome variable and comprised physical, sexual, and emotional violence. Physical IPV referred to respondents' experience, within the 12 months preceding the survey, of being pushed, kicked, slapped, punched, threatened with, or attacked using a knife or other dangerous weapon by a husband or partner. Sexual IPV captured experiences of being forced to have sexual intercourse or to participate in other sexual acts, while emotional IPV referred to being humiliated or made to feel bad by a spouse or partner. Each IPV indicator was dichotomized as yes = 1 and no = 0. The main independent variable was Gender Revolution (GR), constructed from women's paid employment status (did no work = 0; worked = 1) and highest educational attainment (none, primary, secondary or higher). These measures yielded four initial codes, which were subsequently regrouped into low-, medium-, and high-GR categories. Additional explanatory variables were measured at individual and community levels. Individual variables included age, partner's education, wealth index, media exposure, age at first marriage, residence, husband/partner alcohol use, living parity, and women's autonomy. Community-level variables included community wealth, community education, and community media exposure, each categorized as low, medium, or high.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data were analysed in Stata version 17 using univariate and multivariate techniques. Frequency distributions described the selected variables, while logistic regression estimated adjusted odds ratios at the 95% confidence level. Four models were specified: Model I included only the outcome variables; Model II added individual-level factors; Model III incorporated community-level factors; and Model IV combined individual- and community-level factors. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$ to identify factors influencing gender revolution and IPV.

Ethical Consideration

Permission was obtained from ORC Macro/DHS USA before accessing NDHS data via https://dhsprogram.com/data/available-datasets.cfm; Since the study used secondary data and did not collect information directly from respondents, additional consent was not required.

Result

Individual and Community Characteristics

Table 1 presents the individual and community characteristics of respondents.

Educational attainment was generally low: 39.63% of women had no formal education, and only 14.54% had higher education; partners' education showed a similar pattern, with about one-fifth attaining higher education. Wealth distribution was polarized, with 40.76% categorized as poor and 40.88% as rich. Most respondents were aged 25–34 years, and more than half were married before age 20. Media exposure was predominantly low, although about two-fifths reported high autonomy. Emotional violence was the most common IPV outcome (18.58%), followed by physical violence (12.35%) and sexual violence (3.23%). Half of the respondents lived in urban areas, while 18.44% reported that their husbands consumed alcohol. Figure 1 shows clear regional variation in gender revolution (GR), with southern Nigeria consistently recording higher GR levels than the north across 2013, 2018, and 2024. Nationally, GR increased from 40.67% in 2013 to 52.29% in 2024. Community-level indicators also reflected disadvantage, with low community wealth (40.74%), education (43.34%), and media exposure (41.16%) predominating in the study area.

Table1: Percentage Distribution of Gender Revolution and Contraceptive Intentions among Nigerian Women

Variables	**Frequency**	**%**
Highest Level of Education		
No Education	7,473	39.63
Primary	2,210	11.72
Secondary	6,432	34.11
Higher	2,742	14.54
Total	18,857	100.00
Partner Education		
No Education	6,551	34.74
Primary	1,832	9.72
Secondary	6,556	34.77
Higher	391	20.78
Total	18,857	100.00
Wealth Index		
Poor	7,687	40.76
Middle	3,461	18.35
Rich	7,709	40.88
Total	18,857	100.00
Age		
15-24years	3,882	20.59
25-34years	7,736	41.02
35-44years	5,567	29.52
44 & Above	1,672	8.87
Total	18,857	100.00
Age at first marriage		
0-14years	2,821	14.96
15-19 years	7,882	41.80
20&Above	8,154	43.24
Total	18,857	100.00

Mass Media Exposure		
Low	15,966	84.67
Middle	2,450	12.99
High	441	2.34
Total	18,857	100.00
Women Autonomy		
Low	11426	60.59
High	7431	39.41
Total	18,857	100.00
Emotional Violence		
No	15354	81.42
Yes	3503	18.58
Total	18,857	100.00
Sexual Violence		
No	18247	96.77
Yes	610	3.23
Total	18,247	100.00
Physical Violence		
No	16529	87.65
Yes	2328	12.35
Tota	18,857	100.00
Community Wealth		
Low	7682	40.74
Middle	5724	30.35
High	5451	28.91
Total	18,857	100.00
Community Education		
Low	8,172	43.34
Middle	5,330	28.27
High	5,355	28.40
Total	18,857	100.00
Community Media Exposure		
Low	7,762	41.16
Middle	5,808	30.80
High	5,287	28.04
Total	18,857	100.00
Place of Residence		
Rural	8,037	42.62
Urban	10,820	57.38
Total	18,857	100.00
Husband Drinks Alcohol		
No	15,380	81.56
Yes	3,477	18.44
Total	18,857	100.00
Modern Contraceptive Use		
No	15,835	83.97
Yes	3,022	16.03
Total	18,857	100.00
Living Parity		

0	1,427	7.57
1	8,933	47.37
2	6,228	33.03
3	2,269	12.03
Total	18,857	100.00
Gender Revolution		
0	689	5.40
1	5,398	42.31
2	6,670	52.29
Total	12757	100.00

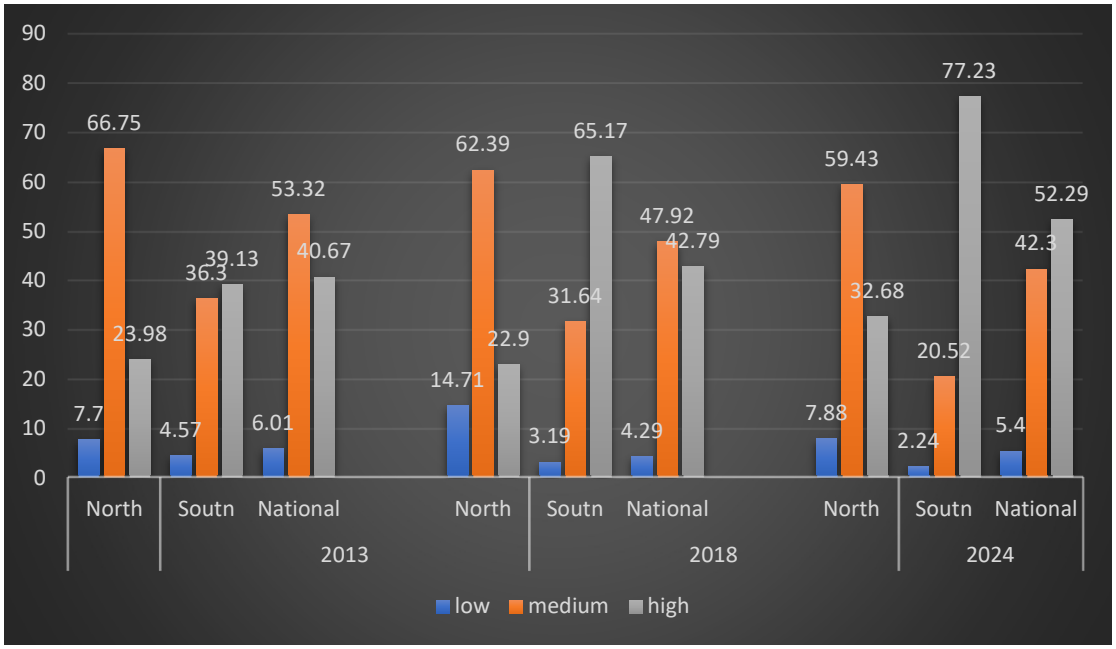

Fig. 1: Pattern of Gender Revolution in Nigeria 2013-2024
(Source: NDHS 2013, 2018 and 2024)

Multivariate Analysis

The multivariate analysis was conducted using five models across Tables 2–4. Model 0 was the empty model, estimating the intercept and random variance without individual or community predictors. Model I included only gender revolution (GR), while Models II and III added individual- and community-level variables, respectively. Model IV combined both predictor levels. In Model I, GR showed a significant association with IPV outcomes, except for sexual violence ($p < .005$). After individual factors were introduced in Model II, GR remained significantly and inversely associated with all IPV indicators ($p < .005$), suggesting that higher GR was associated with lower IPV risk. Partner's education was positively associated with physical violence, particularly primary education (OR = 1.61, CI 1.29–2.01) and secondary education (OR = 1.51, CI 1.24–1.84). Wealth status was also significantly related to IPV, with rich women showing lower odds of sexual violence (OR = 0.58, CI 0.41–0.81) and emotional violence (OR = 0.74, CI 0.64–0.87). Respondents'

age and attitudes toward wife battering were positively and significantly associated with all three IPV outcomes ($p < .005$). In Model III, community characteristics showed varying effects. Community media exposure was significantly associated with physical violence, especially middle (OR = 1.49, CI 1.23–1.81) and high exposure (OR = 1.34, CI 1.06–1.70). Community wealth was significantly related to all IPV outcomes ($p < .005$), while middle community education increased the likelihood of physical and emotional violence, but not sexual violence. Community work was also strongly and significantly associated with IPV ($p < .005$). In the fully adjusted Model IV, GR retained an inverse association with physical and emotional violence, but not sexual violence. Women in middle and high GR categories had lower odds of physical violence (middle OR = 0.67, CI 0.54–0.84; high OR = 0.56, CI 0.41–0.76) and emotional violence (middle OR = 0.72, CI 0.59–0.87; high OR = 0.61, CI 0.46–0.79). Partner's secondary education remained significant for physical violence, while income and age were associated mainly with physical and emotional violence. Community work remained positively associated with all IPV outcomes.

Table 2: Multilevel Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Associated with Physical Violence Among Women in Nigeria

Variables	**Model 1**		**Model 2**		**Model 3**		**Model 4**	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Gender								
Revolution	RC	1.00	RC	1.00	RC	1.00	RC	1.00
0	0.59***	(0.48–	0.67***	(0.53–	0.54***	(0.44–	0.67***	(0.54–
1	0.68***	0.72)	0.55***	0.83)	0.39***	0.67)	0.56***	0.84)
2		(0.55–		(0.41–		(0.29–		(0.41–
Partner		0.83)		0.75)		0.52)		0.76)
Education			RC				RC	
No			1.61***				1.55***	
Education			1.51***	1.00			1.45***	1.00
Primary			1.23	(1.29–			1.20	(1.25–
Secondary				2.00)				1.93)
Higher			RC	(1.24–				(1.18–
Income			0.96	1.84)			RC	1.77)
Poor			0.74**	(0.97–			0.95	(0.95–
Middle				1.57)			0.72**	1.53)
Rich			RC					
Age group			1.25*	1.00			RC	1.00
15-24years			1.44***	(0.81–			1.24*	(0.78–
25-34years			1.33*	1.13)			1.41***	1.16)
35-44years				(0.62–			1.30*	(0.57–
44 & Above				0.89)				0.91)
				1.00				1.00

		(1.04–1.50)				(1.03–1.49)
		(1.19–1.73)				(1.17–1.71)
		(1.06–1.69)				(1.03-1.65)
Mass media exposure						
Poor	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Meddle	0.88	(0.75–1.03)			0.87	(0.75–1.02
High	0.61*	(0.42–0.90)			0.63*	(0.43–0.93)
Attitude toward wife beating						
No	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Yes	4.35***	(3.87–4.88)			4.19***	(3.73–4.72)
Age at first marriage						
0-14years	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
15-19 years	0.98	(0.81-1.19)			0.97	(0.80-1.98)
20&Above	0.98	(0.81-1.20)			0.95	(0.78-1.16)
Women Autonomy						
Low	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
High	0.95	(0.85-1.07)			0.95	(0.85-1.07)
Place of Residence						
Urban	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Rural	1.04	(0.91-1.18)			1.07	(0.93-1.22)
Community Media Exposure						
Low			RC	1.00	RC	1.00
Middle			1.49***	(1.23-1.81)	1.30*	(1.06 - 1.59)
High			1.34*	(1.06 - 1.70)	1.17	(0 .91-1.49)
Community Wealth						
Poor			RC	1.00	RC	1.00
Middle			0	(0 .52-	0.76*	(0.60-
High			.64***	0.77)	0.84	0.95)
Community Education			0.67**	(0.52-		(0 .62 -
Poor				0.84)	RC	1.13)
Middle			RC		1.13	
High			1.26**	1.00	0.92	1.00
Community Work			0.87	(1.06 -		(0 .96-
Poor				1.48)	RC	1.35)
Middle			RC	(1.07 - 0	1.28**	(0.73-
High			1.42***	.69)	1.40**	1.14)
			1.65***			

	1.00	1.00
	(1.21-	(1.09-
	1.65)	1.50)
	(1.38-	(1.15-
	1.98)	1.70)

Notes: OR = Odds Ratio, AOR = Adjusted Odds Ratio, CI = Confidence Interval, Model 1 = Crude model, Model 2 = Individual-level factors, Model 3 = Community-level factors, Model 4 = Full adjusted model
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Table 3: Multilevel Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Associated with Sexual Violence Among Women in Nigeria

	Model 1		**Model 2**		**Model 3**		**Model 4**	
Variables	**OR**	**95% CI**	**OR**	**95% CI**	**OR**	**95% CI**	**OR**	**95% CI**
Gender								
Revolution	0.57**	(0.40–	0.72	(0.50–	0.62*	(0.43–	0.72	(0.50–
1	0.41**	0.81)	0.60	1.04)	0.54*	0.90)	0.71	1.05)
2		(0.29–		(0.39–		(0.31–		(0.40–
		0.59)	RC	1.23)		0.96)	RC	1.26)
Partner			1.20				1.21	
Education			1.27	1.00			1.34	1.00
No Education			1.02	(0.81-			1.05	(0.82-
Primary				1.78)				1.80)
Secondary			RC	(0.89-			RC	(0.94-
Higher			0.86	1.81)			1.15	1.91)
Income			0.58**	(0.65-			0.78	(0.66-
Poor				1.60)				1.66)
Middle			RC				RC	
Rich			0.97	1.00			0.99	1.00
Age group			0.81	(0.63-			0.84	(0.81-
15-24years			0.71	1.15)			0.73	1.64)
25-34years				(0.41-				(0.49-
35-44years				0.82)				1.24)
44 & Above								
				1.00				1.00
				(0.71-				(0.73-
				1.31)				1.35)
				(0.58-				(0.61-
				1.13)				1.18)
				(0.46-				(0.47-
				1.11)				1.15)
Mass media exposure								
Poor			RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Meddle			0.84	(0.59-			0.82	(0.63-
High			0.86	1.18)			0.80	1.20)

Attitude toward wife beating	RC	(0.39-			RC	(0.37-
No	2.45	1.86)			4.19***	1.77)
Yes	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Age at first marriage	0.87	(1.94-			0.87	(1.91–
0-14years	0.89	3.10)			0.87	3.08)
15-19 years						
20&Above	RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Women Autonomy	0.94	(0.64-			0.92	(0.63-
Low		1.20)				1.20)
High	RC	(0.63-			RC	(0.61-
Place of Residence	1.07	1.26)			1.03	1.24)
Urban						
Rural		1.00	RC	1.00	RC	1.00
Community Media		(0.76-	0.99	(0.70-	1.82	(0.74-
Exposure		1.17)	1.15	1.43)	1.51	1.16)
Low				(0.51-		
Middle		1.00		1.21)		1.00
High		(0.83-				(0.78-
		1.38)				1.34)
						1.00
						(1.38-
						2.42)
						(1.04-
						2.21)
Community						
Wealth			RC	1.00	RC	1.00
Poor			0	(0.32-	0.51	(0.33-
Middle			.46***	0.67)	0.57	0.77)
High			0.45**	(0.27-		(0.32-
Community				0.73)	RC	1.04)
Education			RC		0.84	
Poor			0.89	1.00	0.84	1.00
Middle			0.78	(0.66-		(0.61-
High				1.23)	RC	1.16)
Community Work			RC	(0.51-	1.82***	(0.53-
Poor			0.99	1.21)	1.51*	1.31)
Middle			1.60			
High				1.00		1.00
				(1.42-		(1.38-
				2.47)		2.42)
				(1.10-		(1.04-
				2.31)		2.21)

Notes: OR = Odds Ratio, AOR = Adjusted Odds Ratio, CI = Confidence Interval, Model 1 = Crude model, Model 2 = Individual-level factors, Model 3 = Community-level factors, Model 4 = Full adjusted model

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

Table 4: Multilevel Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Associated with Emotional Violence Among Women in Nigeria

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Variables	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Gender Revolution	RC	1.00	RC	1.00	RC	1.00	RC	1.00
0	0.65	(0.54-	0.71	(0.58-	0.64	(0.52-	0.72	(0.59-
1	0.66	78)**	0.59	86)**	0.49	.766)**	0.61	0.87)**
2		(0.55-		(0.45-		(0.38-		(0.46-
Partner Education		0.79)**	RC	0.77)*		0.63)*	RC	0.79)**
No Education			1.01				0.98	
Primary			1.04	1.00			1.01	1.00
Secondary			0.99	(0.83-			0.97	(0.81-
Higher				1.21)**				1.18)
Income			RC	(0.89-			RC	(0.85-
Poor			0.89	1.23)**			0.84	1.19)
Middle			0.74	(0.81-			0.72	(0.80-
Rich				1.20)				1.18)
Age group			RC				RC	
15-24years			1.37	1.00			1.35	1.00
25-34years			1.49	(0.76-			1.47	(0.72-
35-44years			1.40	1.02)			1.37	1.18)
44 & Above				(0.64-				(0.59-
				0.87)*				0.88)*
				1.00				1.00
				(1.18-				(1.16-
				1.60)*				1.58)*
				(1.27-				(1.24-
				1.74)*				1.72)*
				(1.15-				(1.22-
				1.71)**				1.67)*
Mass media exposure			RC	1.00			RC	1.00
Poor			0.94	(0.82-1.08)			1.05	(0.92-
Meddle			1.11	(0.84-1.46)			0.92	1.23)
High								(0.77-
Attitude toward wife beating			RC	1.00			RC	1.08)
No			2.86	(2.58-3.17)*			2.80	
Yes								1.00
Age at first marriage			RC	1.00			RC	(2.52-
0-14years			1.06	(0.91-1.24)			1.05	3.10)*
15-19 years			0.94	(0.80-1.11)			0.92	
								1.00
			RC	1.00			RC	

20&Above	0.97	(0.88-1.07)			0.96	(0.90-
Women Autonomy						1.23)
Low	RC	1.00			RC	(0.78-
High	1.01	(0.91-1.13)			1.04	1.09)
Place of Residence						
Urban			RC	1.00	RC	1.00
Rural			1.03	(0.87-	0.94	(0.87-
Community Media			0.83	1.21)	0.75	1.06)
Exposure				(0.68-		
Low				1.02)		1.00
Middle						(0.93-
High						1.18)
						1.00
						(0.79-
						1.12)
						(0.61-
						0.92)*
Community Wealth						
Poor		RC	1.00	RC		1.00
Middle		0 .79	(0.66-	0.94		(0.78-
High		0.79	0.93) *	1.00		1.15)
Community Education			(0.64-			(0.78-
Poor		RC	0.99) *	RC		1.30)
Middle		1.33		1,28		
High		1.00	1.00	1.06		1.00
Community Work			(1.55-			(1.10-
Poor		RC	1.54) **	RC		1.48) **
Middle		1.38	(0.83-	1.30		(0.87-
High		1.67	1.21)	1.51		1.23)
			1.00			1.00
			(1.21-			(1.14-
			1.56) *			1.48) **
			(1.43-			(1.28-
			1.95) **			1.78) **

Notes: OR = Odds Ratio, AOR = Adjusted Odds Ratio, CI = Confidence Interval, Model 1 = Crude model, Model 2 = Individual-level factors, Model 3 = Community-level factors, Model 4 = Full adjusted model

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between gender revolution (GR) and intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria and assessed the influence of individual and community factors on IPV. Findings revealed a steady increase in GR over the last decade, reflected in improvements in women's education and labour force participation. Female literacy increased from 49% in 2016 to about 62.4% in 2024, compared with 72% among men, indicating a narrowing of the gender gap (Deking Charity Foundation, 2026). Women also accounted for about 48% of total employment, with increasing participation in sectors such as healthcare, education, and information technology. During the same period, IPV prevalence declined from 35.9% in 2018 to 23% in 2024 (NPC and ICF, 2025).

The reduction in IPV may be partly attributable to women's increased economic participation. Studies have shown that women's income can serve as a protective factor against IPV by enhancing economic security and bargaining power (Abramsky *et al*., 2019). However, women who contribute more financially than their partners may also face greater risk of violence because changes in household power dynamics can provoke conflict (Alejandro and Coralia, 2025). Despite improvements in education and employment, women's autonomy remains relatively low due to patriarchal structures reinforced by cultural and religious norms (White *et al*., 2023; Adedokun *et al*., 2022; Adeyemi *et al*., 2016).

The inverse relationship between GR and IPV observed in this study is consistent with previous research demonstrating that improvements in women's status reduce domestic violence (Ibrahim *et al*., 2025; Ikuteyijo, 2025). Education and labour force participation increase women's access to resources, decision-making power, and financial independence, thereby lowering vulnerability to abuse. Women with greater economic control are often more empowered and less tolerant of abusive behaviour (Ibrahim *et al*., 2025). At the same time, IPV can negatively affect women's participation in productive work and undermine their wellbeing and career advancement (Adeyemi *et al*., 2016).

Higher levels of GR also provide women with the knowledge and resources necessary to leave abusive relationships. Consistent with Adeyemi, Ayodele, and Makinde (2023), women with higher educational attainment were less likely to experience IPV than those with lower educational attainment. Education promotes communication, negotiation, and conflict-resolution skills within intimate relationships. Nevertheless, the protective effect of education is not absolute. Women who are more educated than their partners may experience increased violence when traditional gender hierarchies are challenged, prompting some men to use violence to regain control (Alejandro and Coralia, 2025).

Partner's education was also significantly associated with IPV. This finding supports previous studies indicating that higher educational attainment among spouses contributes to better communication, more equitable relationships, and reduced conflict (Saunders *et al*.,2023; Villardón-Gallego *et al*., 2023). However, partners with only primary education exhibited a higher likelihood of IPV. Similar findings suggest that primary education alone may be insufficient to challenge deeply rooted

patriarchal gender norms (Villardón-Gallego *et al*., 2023; Nishan *et al*., 2025).

Age emerged as another important factor. IPV was most prevalent among women aged 15–34 years. More than one-fifth of ever-married women aged 15–19 years experienced physical or sexual violence, while about one-quarter of women aged 20–34 years experienced IPV. This pattern aligns with evidence indicating that IPV risk peaks in early adulthood and then declines with age (WHO, 2026).

Media exposure was significantly associated with a lower risk of IPV, consistent with findings from Yadav and Yadav (2024) and Gavin and Kruis (2022). Exposure to digital and print media increases awareness of women's rights and reduces acceptance of violent behaviour. Similarly, attitudes toward wife-beating were strongly associated with IPV. Women who justified wife-beating were more likely to experience violence than those who rejected such norms, consistent with findings by Ebrahim (2026), Bengesai and Khan (2023). These studies emphasize that patriarchal beliefs continue to normalize violence against women.

Limitation

Despite important findings on gender revolution and IPV in Nigeria, limitations remain. The cross-sectional design prevents causal inference, and longitudinal data would better clarify relationship dynamics. Additionally, retrospective NDHS data may introduce recall bias among respondents.

Conclusion

This study establishes a significant relationship between gender revolution and intimate partner violence in Nigeria. With the rising gender revolution and declining IPV, interventions that expand women's education and paid labour force participation can further reduce IPV while advancing Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5.

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