Determinants of Gender Based Violence against Women and Girls in Ethiopia

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Abstract

Violence against women and girls is a global human rights violation and a substantial development challenge. It affects women throughout the world, and crosses cultural and economic boundaries. The study sought to examine the determinants of gender-based violence against women and girl aged between 15to 49 years. The data used for this study were obtained from the 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey. Descriptive statistics and multilevel logistic regression models were fitted. The descriptive results revealed that about 23% of women have experienced physical violence, 19% have experienced emotional violence, and 10% have experienced sexual violence. Place of residence, employment status, educational level, age, marital status, number of living children, wealth index, and religion were the most important factors associated with gender-based violence against women and girl in Ethiopia. In conclusion, religion and cultural beliefs fuel domestic violence in Ethiopia and ensure that violations are adequately punished should be entrenched in Ethiopia. The women should be empowered socially, emotionally and economically in gender issues and be involved in decision making at all levels. Women should also know their rights in the society. The government should ensure that legal framework and policies including enforcement of legal punishment to the perpetrators of gender-based violence against women are implemented. It's good if ministry of education to consider introducing gender-based violence in educational curriculum to creating awareness at early age.

Keywords: *Physical Violence, Sexual violence, Violence against Women, Multilevel Regression*

1. INTRODUCTION

United Nations defines, gender based violence as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of

such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (WHO, 2021).Gender based violence occurs and is classified in various ways. It can be defined depending on the relationship between the perpetrator and victim (intimate partner violence (IPV) and non-IPV), or by type of the act of Gender based violence, such as sexual, physical or emotional violence (World Bank, 2019).

Violence is often cycle of abuse that manifests itself in many forms throughout women's life. At the beginning of her life, a girl may be target of sex selective abortion or female infanticide in culture where son preference is prevalent during childhood. Violence against girls may include enforced malnutrition lack of access to medical care, female genital mutilation, early marriage, forced prostitution... etc. Some go one to suffer throughout their adult lives - battery, rape and even murdered at the hands of an intimate partner (C. O. Izugbara et al**.,** 2020).

Violence against women and girls is a global human rights violation and a substantial development challenge. It affects women throughout the world, and crosses cultural and economic boundaries. WHO estimates that more than 30% of women worldwide have experienced either physical or sexual partner violence (Devries KM et al, 2013 and Stöckl H et al, 2013). 7% of women worldwide have experienced non-partner sexual assault(Abrahams N et al., 2014).About 100–140 million girls and women worldwide have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM) and more than 3 million girls are at risk for FGM every year in Africa alone **(**Feldman-Jacobs C. and Clifton D. 2014). Nearly 70 million girls worldwide have been married before the age of 18 years, many of them against their will (Degue S et al., 2014 and Modi MN et al., 2014).The effect of violence against women and girls on their health and welfare, their families, and communities is substantial (Devries KM, et al., 2013).The costs of violence against women and girls, both direct and indirect, are a staggering burden for households and economies (World Bank, 2014).

According to multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women, the lifetime prevalence of physical, sexual, or both physical and sexual violence ranges from 15% (Japan) to 71% (Ethiopia).Nearly one half (49%) of ever-married women faced physical violence, 59% of them experienced sexual violence, 71% of them had one or the other form of violence, or both, over their life time. About

35% of all ever-married women experienced at least one severe form of violence by a partner (Chernet and Cherie, 2020). A cross sectional study conducted in Nigeria showed that almost one in four (21.5%) ever-married women faced IPV at some point in their lives (Benebo FO, 2018).According to research conducted in Gondar referral Hospital, the overall prevalence of domestic violence among pregnant women was estimated to be 58.7% with emotional violence being the most common (57.8%), followed by physical violence (32.2%), and sexual violence (7.6%). It also showed that housewives, women with no salary of their own, partners' daily use of alcohol, and women who disobeyed their partner were found to be positively and significantly associated with domestic violence during pregnancy (Fekadu E, 2018).

In Ethiopia, violence against women and girls continues to be a major challenge and a threat to women's empowerment. Women and girls face physical, emotional, and sexual abuses that undermine their health and ability to earn a living; disrupt their social systems and relationships; and rob them of their childhood and education (CSA, 2016).Consequently, this paper aims to investigate the determinant factors associated with gender based violence among women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years in Ethiopia.

Significance of the Study

The finding of the study helps in planning, formulation and implementation of policy concerning the women's violence. The results of this study was used by government officials, other concerned bodies and policy makers on women's violence aspects in formulating new policy and in monitoring and evaluation of current activities of the key gender based violence against women and girls in Ethiopia. The findings of the study also provide information about the wide spread of women's violence rate to stakeholders.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Data Sources

This study used data collected from the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). The Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey were conducted by the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) under the auspices of the support of the Ministry of Health. The sampling frame used for the EDHS was the Population and Housing Census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) in 2007. During the 2007 Population and Housing Census, each of the kebele was subdivided into convenient areas called census enumeration areas (EAs).

2.2. Sampling techniques

The EDHS sample was selected using a stratified, two-stage cluster design and EAs were the sampling units for the first stage. The interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data on women of reproductive age (15-49) years. The questionnaire included socio-demographic, socioeconomic, pregnancy, and maternal health service-related variables related to women's health. A stratified two-stage cluster sampling with a total of 645 Enumeration Areas (EAs) (202 in urban and 443 in rural areas) was selected with a probability proportional to EA size. In total, 5,860 women were asked questions about violence against women. Three percent of women eligible for the domestic violence module could not be successfully interviewed, mainly due to lack of privacy. Specially constructed weights were used to adjust for the selection of only one woman per household and to ensure that the domestic violence subsample was nationally representative.

2.3. Variables of the study

2.3.1. Dependent variables

The dependent variable for this study is gender based violence. The three measure of gender based violence's against women and girls are:

Physical Violence: push her, shake her, or throw something at you; slap you; twist your arm or pull her hair; punch you with his/her fist or with something that could hurt you; kick you, drag you, or beat you up; try to choke you or burn you on purpose; or threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon

Sexual Violence: physically force female to have sexual intercourse with him even when she did not want to; physically force her to perform any other sexual acts she did not want to; force her with threats or in any other way to perform sexual acts she did not want to.

Emotional Violence: say or do something to humiliate female in front of others; threaten to hurt or harm her or someone close to her; insulting or making feel bad about herself.

Therefore gender based violence captured as a dichotomous variable and coded as 1 if the female experienced any type of violence (Physical violence, sexual violence or emotional violence), and 0 otherwise.

2.3.2. Independent Variables

The independent variables of the study are classified as demographic and socioeconomic variables which are expected to determine gender-based violence. The

predictor variables included in the study were: Place of residence, region, employment status, educational level, age, marital status, number of living children, wealth index, husband alcohol consumption and religion.

2.4. Methods of Data analysis

2.5.1. Multilevel Logistic Regression Model

Multilevel statistical approach was used to model the relationship between gender-based violence against women and girl's status and the explanatory variables. In a multilevel logistic regression model, two levels of data hierarchy were stated (for instance, individual women/girls and region). Units at one level are nested within units at the next higher level. In this study, the basic data structure of the two-level logistic regression is a collection of J groups (regions) and within-group j *(j= 1,2,…,J)*, a random sample n_j of level-one units (females). The response variable is denoted by;

$$Y_{ij} = \begin{cases} \mathbf{1} & \text{if the } i^{th} \text{ female in the } j^{th} \text{ region is exprienced violence} \\ \mathbf{0} & \text{if the } i^{th} \text{ female in the } j^{th} \text{ region is not exprienced violence} \end{cases}$$

With probabilities, $P_{ij} = P(Y_{ij} = 1 \mid X_{ij}, u_{ij})$ is the probability of experienced violence for the i^{th} youth in the j^{th} region and $1 - P_{ij} = P(Y_{ij} = 0 \mid X_{ij})$ is the probability of not experienced violence for the i^{th} youth in the j^{th} region.

The Random Intercept Model

The Random intercept model is used to model unobserved heterogeneity in the overall response by introducing random effects. In the random intercept model, the intercept is the only random effect meaning that the groups differ with respect to the average value of the response variable, but the relationship between explanatory and response variables cannot differ between groups.

The random intercept model expresses the log-odds, i.e. the logit of P_{ij}, as a sum of a linear function of the explanatory variables. That is:

$$\log(P_{ij}) = \log\left(\frac{p_{ij}}{1-p_{ij}}\right) = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1 x_{1ij} + \beta_{2ij} x_{2ij} + ... + \beta_k x_{kij}, i = 1,2,...n,\ j = 1,2,...J$$ Where the intercept term β_{0j} is assumed to vary randomly and is given by the sum of an average intercept β_0 and group-dependent random errors U_{0j}, that is $\beta_{0j} = \beta_0 + U_{0j}$. As a result, we have

$\log it(P_{ij}) = \beta_0 + \sum_{h=1}^{k} \beta_h x_{hij} + U_{0j}$ where $\beta_0 + \sum_{h=1}^{k} \beta_h x_{hij}$ the fixed part of the model and the remaining U_{0j} is called the random part of the model. It is assumed that the residual U_{0j} is mutually independent and normally distributed with mean zero and variance δ_0^2

The Random Coefficient Model

The random coefficients build up on the random intercept model by allowing the effects of individual predictors to vary randomly across level 2, that is, level 1 slope coefficients are allowed to take on different values in different aggregate groupings. In the random coefficient model, both the intercepts and slopes are allowed to differ across the region. It is given by:

$$\log(P_{ij}) = \log\left(\frac{p_{ij}}{1-p_{ij}}\right) = \beta_0 + \sum_{h=1}^{k} \beta_h x_{hij} + U_{0j} + \sum_{h=1}^{k} U_{1j} X_{1ij}$$

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board of ICF International. Consent was also sought from each woman during the fieldwork. The authors of this manuscript sought permission from the EDHS Program for use of the dataset for this study. Further information about the EDHS data usage and ethical standards is available at http://goo.gl/ny8T6X.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSION

3.1. Descriptive Statistics Result

Out of 5860 total Women and girls aged between 15 and 49years included in the study,

about 23% of female have experienced physical violence, 19% have experienced emotional violence, 10% have experienced sexual violence during a pregnancy at the time of the survey (Table 1). Similarly Culture influenced gender based violence, 32% of the respondents said that their culture did not allow women to make decisions concerning the family and that 54%of the respondents agreed that FGM was a form of violence against women in their culture while 46% disagreed with the

notion that FGM was a form of violence against women in their culture. 28% of the respondents agreed that it was culturally right for husband to beat a wife. This result is consistent with the study done by (Cynthia O.et al., 2020 and Jepkoech, K., 2021)

Table 1 Descriptive Result

Gender based Violence status	**Yes**	**No**
Physical Violence	1348 (23%)	4512 (77%)
Sexual violence	586 (10%)	5274 (90%)
Emotional violence	1114 (19%)	4746 (81%)
Culturally allow women to make decisions	3984 (68%)	1876 (32%)
FGM a form of violence against women	3164 (54%)	2696 (46%)
culturally right for husband to beat a woman	1641 (28%)	4219 (72%)

Source: Own calculation from EDHS, 2016 data

3.2. Multilevel Regression Results

Chi-square test

A two-level structure (with individual female as a first level unit, and region as a second level unit) was used. The chi-square test was used to assess heterogeneity between the regions of Ethiopia. The test results are $\chi 2 = 526$ with d.f = 10($p = 0.001$). This shows there is confirmation of heterogeneity with respect to the regions.

Multicollinerity test

Before making any statistical inference, the researcher needs to check that the model fits sufficiently well and check for influential observations that have an impact on the estimates of the coefficients, and make a valid analysis as follows:

Table 2: Multicollinerity checking between each explanatory variable

Variables	**VIF**
Place of residence	2.545
Age	2.457
Religion	1.235

Employment status	1.878
Marital status	3.335
Number of living children	4.120
husband's alcohol consumption	2.354
Wealthy index	1.854
Region	2.142

Source: Own calculation from EDHS, 2016 data

The multicollinearity among each explanatory variable was tested using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). In this study, the VIF for each of the explanatory variables was less than five (5), and showing the absence of multicollinearity in the models i.e. indicates that there is no problem of multicollinearity in the data (Table 2).

3.2.1. Variance Component Model

We first fitted a simple model with no predictors, i.e., variance components model that predicts the probability of violence status. The variance components model results revealed the information of the fixed effect (Table 3); the estimated average log odds of violence status among female aged between 15 and 49 years across regions of the country is -0.564 which is significant. This shows the overall proportion of prevalence of gender-based violence among women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years in Ethiopia without accounting for other sources of variation.

In order to get an idea of how many variations in gender-based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years were attributable to the region level factors, it is useful o see the intraregional correlation coefficient. The intraregional correlation coefficient (ICC) in variance components model is ICC = 0.115, meaning that roughly 11.5% of the total variability in gender based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years is significantly attributable to the regional level, whereas the remaining 88.5% is attributable to individual level (i.e., within-region differences).

Table 3: Estimates for variance components model

Fixed part	**Estimate**	**S. error**	**z-value**	**p-value**
intercept	-0.564	0.121	-4.661	0.0023
Random effect	**Estimate**	**S. error**	**z-value**	**p-value**

$\hat{\sigma}_u^2$	0.283	0.105	2.74	0.025
ICC(ρ)	0.115	.0478	2.071	

Source: Own calculation from EDHS, 2016 data

3.2.2. Random Intercept Model

To identify the effect of explanatory variables a multilevel binary logistic model with random intercept and fixed explanatory variables was estimated. Note that there is change (decrease) in the estimate of the between-region variance from variance component model 0.283 to random intercept model 0.235, suggesting that the distribution of fixed explanatory variables is somewhat different across regions of the country. The results from the random intercept model in Table 4 showed that the random intercept is significant implying that the average proportion of gender based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years differs from region to region.

The results displayed in Table 4 showed that the intraregional correlation coefficient (ICC) is estimated as $\hat{\rho}$=0.099, meaning that roughly 9.9% of the total variability in gender based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years is attributable to the regional level, with the remaining unexplained 90.1% being due to individual differences.

Table 4: Estimates of random intercept model

Variables	**Categories**	β	**S.E**	**Wald**	**sign**	**odds**
Place of residence	Urban (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Rural	0.536	0.129	4.155	0.001**	3.56
Age	15-24 (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	25-34	0.198	0.098	2.21	0.037*	1.130
	35-49	-0.382	0.152	-2.513	0.031*	0.843
Educational Level	No education (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Primary	-0.299	0.075	-3.97	0.001**	0.865
	Secondary and above	-0.642	0.109	-0.589	0.002**	0.624
Religion	Orthodox (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Catholic	-0.45	0.32	-1.41	0.113	0.812
	Protestant	-0.35	0.23	-1.52	0.085	0.685
	Muslim	-0.61	0.497	-1.22	0.093	0.521
	Traditional	0.872	0.230	3.79	0.001**	1.97

	Other	0.574	0.328	1.75	0.072	1.23
Employment status	Employed (Ref)	-----	----	----	-----	----
	Not employed	0.924	0.27	3.42	0.032*	2.53
Marital status	Single (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Married	0.499	0.116	4.30	0.025*	2.071
	Separated	0.689	0.13	5.30	0.012*	3.252
Number of lining children	0 (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	1-2	0.125	0.031	4.1	0.004**	2.52
	3-4	0.82	0.25	3.25	0.015*	1.64
	5+	0.93	0.314	2.96	0.037*	1.19
Wealthy index	Poor (Ref)	----	----	----	---	----
	Medium	-0.604	0.12	-5.33	0.004**	0.724
	Rich	-0.31	0.092	-3.37	0.008**	0.652
Husband's alcohol consumption	Does not drink	----	----	----	---	----
	Drink/never get drunk	0.251	0.071	3.54	0.014*	1.256
	Gets drunk sometimes	0.682	0.125	5.456	0.001**	3.64
	Gets drunk very often	0.793	0.131	6.053	0.001**	5.19
Random effect						
$\hat{\sigma}_u^2$		0.235	0.095			
ICC(ρ)		0.099				

Source: Own calculation from EDHS, 2016 data. ** is significant at 1% and * is significant at 5%

The result of random intercept reveals that, female who live in rural areas of the country were about 35.2% more likely to be experienced violence (OR = 3.52) compared to female who live in urban areas, controlling for other variables in the model. This result maintains what is stated by studies done by (Eshetu A. et al., 2021). Female in the age group 25-34years were 1.13(OR= 1.130) times more likely to be experience violence compared to female in the age group 15-24 years, but Female in the age group 35-49years were about 15.7% (OR= 0.843) less likely to be experience violence compared to female in the age group 15-24 years. This result maintains what is stated with studies done by (Eunice J. et al., 2021).Similarly female with traditional religions were about 19.7% (OR= 1.97) more likely to be experience violence

compared to female with orthodox religions. Employed female were about 45.6% (OR= 0.54) less likely to be experience violence compared to female who have not employed. This finding is consistent with the previous studies done by (Muluken D, et al., 2020).

The odds of gender based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years with primary and secondary education were about 13.5% and 37.6% less likely to be experience violence compared to female who have no education respectively. This finding is consistent with the previous studies done by (Ömer Alkan1 & ŞeydaÜnver, 2021). Regarding marital status, the women who have married and separated were about 20.71% and 32.52% more likely to be experience violence compared to a single woman respectively. This result maintains what is stated with studies done by (RashaA & Rania A., 2017). Regarding number of living children, a woman who have 1-2 living children, 3-4 living children, and 5+ living children were about 25.2%, 16.4% and 11.9% more likely to be experience violence compared to women who have no living children respectively. This finding is consistent with the previous studies done by (Jean J.,et al., 2019).The incidence of gender based violence among rich and medium female were decreased by 34.8% and 27.6%, as likened with those poor females. Similarly a woman whose husband can drink/never get drunk, Gets drunk sometimes, and Gets drunk very often were about 12.56%, 36.4%, and 51.9% more likely to be experience violence compared to a woman whose husband does not drink respectively. This result maintains what is stated with studies done by (C. O. Izugbara et al**.,** 2020).

3.2.3. Random Coefficient Model

It is possible to generalize the model so that the effect of level 1 covariates is different in each region. This can be done by adding random coefficients in front of some of the individual-level covariates of the model. This model contains a random slope for wealth index and educational level, which means that it allows the effect of the coefficient of the explanatory variable to vary from region to region.

Table 5: Estimates of random coefficient model

Variables	**Categories**	β	**S.E**	**Wald**	**sign**	**odds**
Place of residence	Urban (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Rural	0.534	0.128	4.13	0.001**	3.52
Age	15-24 (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	25-34	0.197	0.097	2.21	0.036*	1.130
	35-49	-0.384	0.151	-2.516	0.031*	0.843
Religion	Orthodox (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Catholic	-0.451	0.321	-1.41	0.113	0.812
	Protestant	-0.356	0.232	-1.51	0.086	0.685
	Muslim	-0.615	0.498	-1.23	0.093	0.521
	Traditional	0.872	0.230	3.79	0.001**	1.97
	Other	0.575	0.327	1.751	0.071	1.23
Employment status	Not employed (Ref)	-----	----	----	-----	----
	Employed	-0.925	0.274	3.41	0.033*	0.54
Marital status	Single (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	Married	0.501	0.115	4.32	0.023*	2.071
	Separated	0.688	0.131	5.30	0.012*	3.252
Number of living children	0 (Ref)	----	----	----	----	----
	1-2	0.129	0.033	4.12	0.004**	2.52
	3-4	0.821	0.251	3.26	0.015*	1.64
	5+	0.932	0.315	2.95	0.037*	1.19
Husband's alcohol consumption	Does not drink	----	----	----	---	----
	Drink/never get drunk	0.254	0.072	3.55	0.014*	1.256
	Gets drunk sometimes	0.681	0.126	5.452	0.001**	3.64
	Gets drunk very often	0.791	0.133	6.051	0.001**	5.19
Random effect						
$\hat{\sigma}_u^2 = Var(u_{0j})$		0.293	0.195			
$\hat{\sigma}_1^2 = Var(u_{1j})$		0.0282	0.0228			
$\hat{\sigma}_2^2 = Var(u_{2j})$		0.0066	0.027			
$\hat{\sigma}_{u1}^2 = Cov(u_{0j}, u_{1j})$		0.0075	0.0192			

$\hat{\sigma}^2_{u2} = Cov(u_{0j}, u_{2j})$		-0.0571	0.0415			
$\hat{\sigma}^2_{12} = Cov(u_{1j}, u_{2j})$		-0.0267	0.0397			
ICC(ρ)		0.119				

Source: Own calculation from EDHS, 2016 data. ** is significant at 1% and * is significant at 5%

By adding level 1 predictors, the ICC increased and is estimated as $\hat{\rho}$ = 0.119, meaning that roughly 11.9% of the total variability in gender based violence against women and girls aged between 15 and 49 years is attributable to the random factor and region in random coefficient multilevel binary logistic model. From Table 5 the random coefficient estimates for intercepts and the slopes vary significantly at 5% significance level, which implies that there is a considerable variation in the effects of educational level and wealth index; these variables differ significantly across the regions. The variance of intercept in the random slope model is 0.293, which is still large, relative to its standard error of 0.195. Thus there remains some regional level variance unaccounted for in the model. The variance corresponding to the slope of wealth is 0.0066, which is relatively small with respect to its standard error; this suggests that the effect of wealth index may be justified in constraining the effect to be fixed. Likewise, the variance corresponding to the slope of educational level is 0.0282, which is relatively large with respect to its standard error (S.E = 0.0228); thus, this suggests that the effect of family education may be justified in constructing the effect to be random.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study has shown that the norms and practices of male dominated patriarchal societies that is deliberately skewed in favor of the male, and is the basis for justifying the continued perpetration of domestic violence especially against the female gender, have to a large extent sustained the existent primordial gender power imbalance. Efforts at changing these norms have often been resisted by vested male-interests. This is so because males dominate the socio-political and economic activities in most developing countries and even when legislations on gender equity are passed they are hardly defended or implemented.

In Addition, religion and cultural beliefs fuel domestic violence in Ethiopia, therefore beyond the domestication of the various UN conventions on Women rights and Gender

Equity, the much needed high level governmental political will buttressed by cogent administrative policies and supportive legal frameworks that would ensure that violations are adequately punished should be entrenched in Ethiopia. There is equally a need for socio-cultural reorientation for our men dominated societies to appreciate the fact that wife battering is barbaric, primitive and inhuman; that there are dignifying and amicable sways of resolving domestic problems or conflicts other than wife beating.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- ✓ The Ethiopian government should develop strategies to stop the violence and provide safe solutions for victims of gender based violence.
- ✓ Service providers should consider the cultural background and the unique issues faced by the gender-based violence victims and provide culturally competent services to children, youth, and families who have been exposed to gender based violence.
- ✓ The government should have a separate budget line in the state budget allocated for implementing strategies to combat gender based violence and specifically and comprehensively address the needs of survivors.

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