

MULTI-COUNTRY ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN EARLY MARRIAGE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE EXPERIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

- Adolescence as a period of increased vulnerability to violence exposure
 - WHO global estimates 2021: 1 in 4 young women who have been in a relationship will have already experienced IPV
- Gender inequality, structures of patriarchy, and social norms that are in place in countries can exacerbate the risk for overlapping forms of gender-based violence



INTRODUCTION

- Child marriage is declining globally but is still common in many countries and puts women at high risk of exploitation, abuse and violence
 - Power imbalances within relationships (lack of agency and autonomy)
 - Large age and education gaps
 - Community norms supporting wife-beating



AIM

- To estimate the associations between early marriage and the experience of recent IPV among young women aged 20-24 years in 48 LMICs

Age at first marriage as
a continuous variable

Multilevel approach to
consider variations
between countries



METHODS

- DHS (2010+) from 48 LMICs
 - Domestic violence module (subsample)
- Ever-married women aged 20-24
 - Armenia (<N=316)
 - India (>N=8847)



METHODS

- **Early marriage (main exposure)**
 - Question about the age of first marriage/cohabitation
 - Continuous

- **Recent intimate partner violence against women**
 - Physical, sexual and emotional (individually)
 - At least one act in the past 12 months

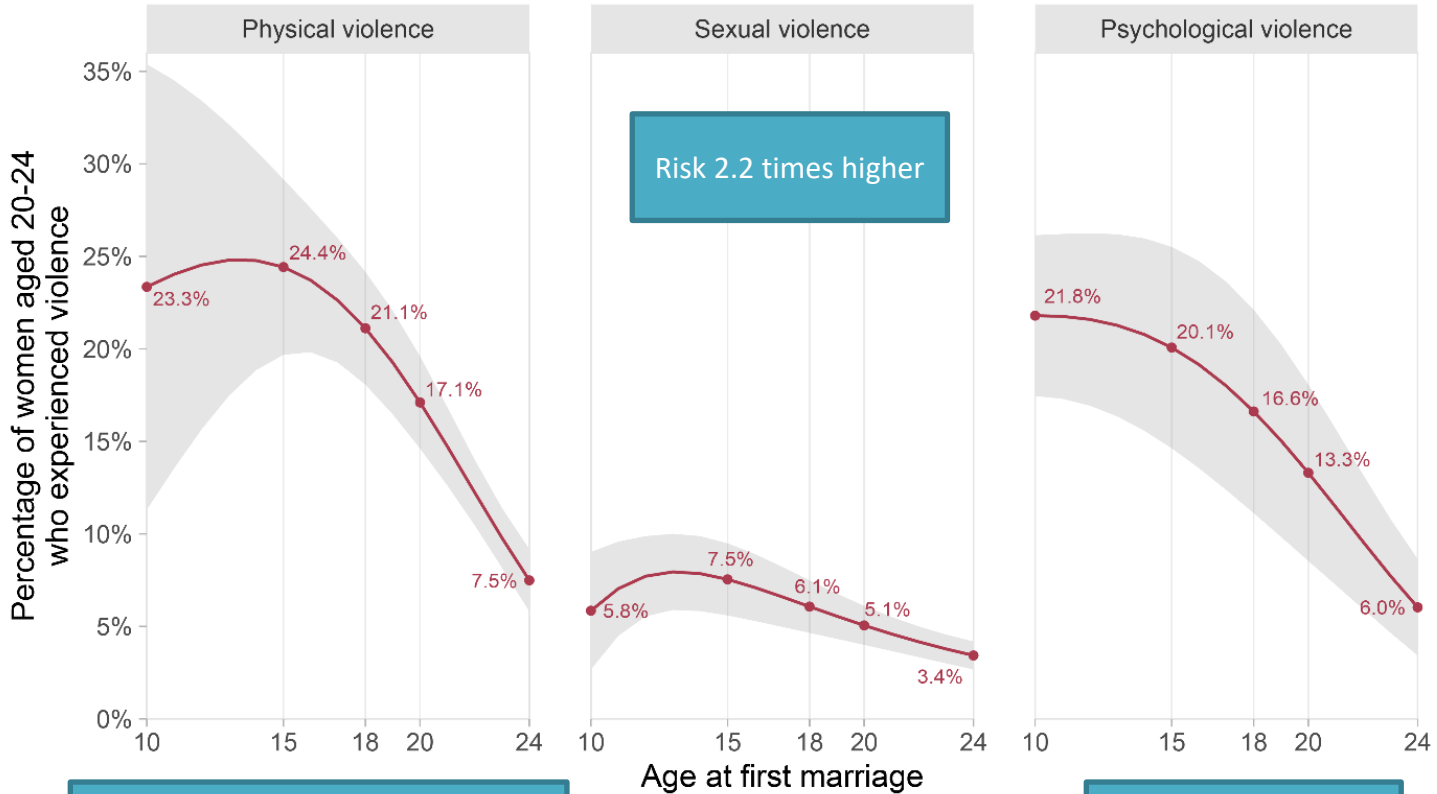
METHODS

- Data analyses

- Multilevel logistic regression models (1: woman; 2: country)
 - Margins to estimate IPV prevalence for each year of marriage (predicted values)
 - Fractional polynomials to determine the best parametrization for age at marriage
- Pooled dataset
 - sampling weights to consider the population of women 20-24 years in each country
- Adjustments
 - wealth, area of residence, age and education



MAIN RESULTS



Risk 2.2 times higher

Risk 3.3 times higher among girls married at age 15 compared to girls married at age 24

Risk 3.4 times higher



SUMMARY

- We draw on data from 56,171 married young women from 48 countries and find that, overall, IPV (physical, sexual, and psychological) decreases as age at first marriage increases
- IPV risk starts to decline when girls marry after age 15 with more pronounced differences when the age of marriage is between 20 and 24 Years



TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- Our results show that delaying marriage, along other benefits, can be a useful strategy for the reduction of IPV
- Girls that marry early are an important group to be targeted by interventions that aim at preventing and reducing violence against women
- Integrated and complimentary approaches are needed



THANK YOU!



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