



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

Papua New Guinea Demographic and Health Survey 2016-2018

Analysis of Data Related to Gender-Based Violence at National and Sub-National Levels



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Introduction

UNFPA supports the improved availability of quality gender-based violence (GBV) data and information as part of the Spotlight Initiative, the global partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030.

Improving the quality and quantity of available information on the prevalence, incidence and characteristics of GBV in Papua New Guinea (PNG) will support a shared understanding of the priorities between all stakeholders in efforts to address GBV and promote gender equality more broadly, from enabling informed policy and decision-making to supporting the quality, accessibility and coordination of services and interventions.

The PNG Demographic and Health Survey 2016–18 (DHS)¹ generated national population-based statistical data on gender-based violence (GBV). The DHS key findings provide evidence for raising awareness among parliamentarians, decision-makers, and the public on the pervasiveness of all forms of GBV and its impact on women, children, and communities, and PNG's development.

Closer analysis of the statistical data presented in the DHS helps to gain a better understanding of GBV prevalence and patterns at regional and sub-national levels and offers more detailed information for utilisation in communication and advocacy materials.

An independent consultant was contracted by UNFPA to conduct analysis in collaboration with the National Statistical Office (NSO). An NSO officer was commissioned by UNFPA to generate specification tables from the DHS dataset to support further analysis of the variables.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the findings generated by further analysis of DHS data on GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). The analysis presented in this report will be complemented by a literature review of existing studies and research to strengthen the interpretation of these findings and provide further contextual understanding to inform advocacy for the prevention and response to GBV, policy development and government planning including budgeting, and the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of GBV response and prevention programs and services. The findings will be utilised to develop and disseminate national and sub-national knowledge and advocacy products, and to identify knowledge gaps and priorities to inform future research agendas.

Methodology

The consultant reviewed the key findings of the DHS, focusing on data related to Marriage and Sexual Activity (Chapter 4); Family Planning (Chapter 7); HIV/AIDS-related Knowledge,

¹ National Statistical Office (NSO) [Papua New Guinea] and ICF. 2019. *Papua New Guinea Demographic and Health Survey 2016-18*. Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: NSO and ICF.

Attitudes and Behaviour (Chapter 13); Women's Empowerment (Chapter 15); and Domestic Violence² (Chapter 16).

Working closely with the NSO Officer and the UNFPA Programme Specialist for GBV and SRHR, the consultant identified specification sets for generating additional tables with the aim to examine the distribution of specific indicators, the associations between variables, and to identify patterns at the regional and provincial levels.

A total of 21 DHS tables were used to generate the specification tables at regional and provincial levels (See Annex 1 Technical Notes).

Because the DHS is a representative survey at the national level, closer analysis of patterns at the regional and provincial levels must be done with caution given the different provincial sample sizes. Nonetheless, subnational analysis of the DHS can yield important information about the distribution of findings, which can then be complemented by contextual analysis to inform advocacy efforts and targeted programming.

This report presents findings based on an analysis of the specification tables that were generated. For the ease of cross-referencing, key findings as published in the DHS are presented in text boxes. Further discussion of findings will be provided in the literature review report.

² The 2016–18 DHS focuses on Domestic Violence as a form of GBV (DHS, p. 289). For never-married women, survey questions asked about their experience of violence committed by anyone. For ever-married women, survey questions asked about their experience of violence committed by their current and former husbands/partners and by others. The term 'intimate partner' was not used. It is important to note that while the *PNG National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence* uses the term GBV, support services within the country commonly use the term Family and Sexual Violence (FSV).

Distribution of background characteristics across regions and provinces

Eight DHS tables were used to generate specification sets of data by region and province to examine how factors related to GBV and SRHR are distributed across the country in relation to background characteristics (age; residence; marital status; the number of living children; education; employment; wealth quintile) and to identify any significant patterns at the sub-national level.

4.1 Specification set based on Table 4.4 *Median age at first marriage by background characteristics*

The timing of first marriage has implications for women's sexual and reproductive health and may be a predictor of women's exposure to the risk of violence perpetrated by a spouse or partner.³

The median age at first marriage for women shows little variation at the regional level across PNG, ranging from 19.7 years in the Highlands to 21.4 years in the Islands. The Highlands region has the widest range between provinces with Chimbu at 18.7 years and Hela at 24.1 years for women. Chimbu shows the largest median age difference between women (18.7 years) and men (25 years) at first marriage. Eastern Highlands and Hela are the only provinces where the median age at first marriage for men is younger (19.1 years and 20 years) than for women (23.3 years and 24.1 years).

The 2016–18 DHS found that education is the single most significant variable influencing the national median age at first marriage for women, with an increase from 18.4 years among women with elementary education to 23.5 years among women with higher than a secondary education.⁴ This is most apparent at the provincial level in Milne Bay and New Ireland, which both show an increase in age at first marriage to 24.3 years among women with higher education.

Exceptions to this association are found in the Highlands region, where Enga shows the age of first marriage at 25.6 years for women with only elementary education compared to 22 years for women with higher education, and Hela shows the age of first marriage at 24.4 years for women with primary school education compared to 21.5 years for women with secondary education (figures on higher education not reported). Interpretation of this data is speculative,

DHS Key Findings on Age at First Marriage

Marriage is nearly universal in Papua New Guinea, although women marry about 5 years earlier than men.

The median age at first marriage is just over 20 years among women and 25 years among men age 25-49. Trends also show that overall proportion of women and men who are currently in a union has decreased since 2006, especially among men (DHS p.65).

³ Hindin, Michelle J., Sunita Kishor, and Donna L. Ansara. 2008. Intimate Partner Violence among Couples in 10 DHS Countries: Predictors and Health Outcomes. DHS Analytical Studies No. 18. Calverton, Maryland, USA: Macro International Inc.

⁴ DHS, p. 67.

but one explanation might relate to customary marriage practices where education level is a factor in family decision-making regarding betrothal and bride price.

While the national median age of first marriage for women engaged in employment for cash is 21.2 years, this increases significantly for several provinces, including Hela (24.7 years), East Sepik (23.6 years), and New Ireland (24.1).

Similarly, while household wealth does not appear to influence the median age of first marriage for women at the national level (from 20 years in the lowest quintile to 21.1 years in the highest quintile), there are some interesting variations at the provincial level. In West Sepik, the fourth quintile appears to be the single most important variable associated with the highest median age at first marriage for the province (23.7 years). In Hela, 24.9 years is the median age at first marriage associated with the highest quintile.

By contrast, both East New Britain and the Autonomous Republic of Bougainville (AROB) show an association between the lowest quintile and highest age at first marriage for women (24 years for both provinces). This data might reflect the extent to which lower household wealth limits opportunities for marriage, particularly in a context where other demographic variables might influence household wealth, such as a disproportionate ratio between young women and men due to outward migration, displacement, or conflict.

Generally, across all regions and provinces, women who have five or more living children report a younger age at first marriage, with the national median age at 18.9 years. Chimbu has the lowest median age at first marriage for women with 5+ living children (17.2 years). However, Eastern Highlands shows a different association, where the median age at first marriage for women with 1-2 living children is 19.8 years, whereas, for women with 5+ children, it is 24.6 years.

4.2 Specification set based on Table 15.9.1 *Women's participation in decision-making by background characteristics*

Women's participation in household decision-making is one of several key indicators the DHS uses to define women's empowerment and the extent to which women can determine their own choices about their lives and livelihoods. Women's participation in household decisions is based on whether they make decisions alone or jointly with their husbands in all three of the following areas: (1) their own health care, (2) major household purchases, and (3) visits to their family or relatives.⁵

The Islands region shows the highest participation of women in decisions related to major household purchases (75%) and visits to family or relatives (82.4%), and the highest percentage for participation in all three decisions (69.3%). Within the Islands regions, AROB has the highest percentage of participation in each of the three categories, including the highest percentage overall of women involved in all three decisions (83.6%).

DHS Key Findings on Women's Participation in Decision Making

More than 8 in 10 currently married women participate, either by themselves or jointly with their husband, in decisions regarding their own health care, while 70% decide alone or jointly on making major household purchases and 79% decide alone or jointly on visiting their family or relatives. Sixty-two percent participate in all three decisions, while 10% do not participate in any of the decisions (DHS p. 259).

Of all three categories, women's participation in decisions related to their own health shows the strongest percentages in all regions and provinces. The Southern region shows the highest

⁵ DHS, p. 263.

participation of women in decisions related to their own health care (87.8%), with Milne Bay reporting 93.2%.

The Highlands region shows the lowest percentages of participation in each of the three categories and low or no participation in decision-making overall. This is most apparent in the Southern Highlands, where only 46% of women participate in all three decisions, while 16.4% do not participate in any of the decisions.

The distribution of participation in decision-making in relation to background characteristics varies considerably at the provincial level. While it is difficult to draw conclusions about associations due to varying sample sizes and lack of contextual information, general observations suggest that higher age cohorts and higher numbers of living children confer status and more agency for women in decision-making across all categories. Likewise, higher education levels and employment, whether for cash or no cash, also show a pattern of higher participation across all regions and provinces. Of interest are the strong percentages in the younger age cohorts of women participating in decisions about their health.

4.3 Specification sets based on selected tables in DHS Chapter 15 Domestic Violence

The following specification sets were generated from selected tables in the DHS chapter on domestic violence to look more closely at the distribution of patterns across regions and provinces based on background characteristics.

4.3.1 Specification set based on Table 16.1 Experience of physical violence

The 2016-18 DHS found that 56% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age 15, and 38% experienced physical violence often or sometimes in the 12 months preceding the survey.⁶ Table 16.1 presents the national data by background characteristics and provides data on the experience of physical violence by region and province.

The specification set for Table 16.1 allows a closer examination of regional and provincial values by background characteristics. This information is helpful for developing tailored awareness and advocacy materials and for scoping at the sub-national level to optimize interventions that are contextually responsive and targeted.

⁶ DHS, p. 290.

Key Findings on Domestic Violence from Chapter 16, DHS 2016-18

Experience of violence: 56% of women age 15-49 in Papua New Guinea have experienced physical violence since age 15, and 28% have experienced sexual violence. Eighteen percent of women who have ever been pregnant have experienced violence during pregnancy.

Spousal violence: 63% of ever-married women have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence. The most common type of spousal violence is physical violence (54%), followed by emotional violence (51%). Twenty-nine percent of women have experienced spousal sexual violence.

Injuries due to spousal violence: 57% of women who have experienced spousal physical or sexual violence have sustained injuries. Cuts, bruises, or aches are the most common forms of injuries reported.

Onset of spousal violence: Among currently married women age 15-49 who have been married only once, 21% first experienced spousal physical or sexual violence within the first two years of marriage, and 37% had experienced such violence within five years. This suggests that a large proportion of spousal violence, both physical and sexual, begins early in marriage.

Help seeking: 35% of women who have ever experienced physical or sexual violence have sought help, while 13% have never sought help but have told someone about the violence. Thirty-nine percent of women who have experienced any type of physical or sexual violence have not sought help or told anyone about the violence (DHS p. 289, 295).

At the national level, women’s experience of physical violence increases from 39% among those aged 15-19 to 62.6% among those aged 30-39 before dropping to 54.1% among those aged 45-49. Women who reported experiencing physical violence *often* in the 12 months prior to the survey increases from 3.4% among those aged 15-19 to 11.4% among those aged 30-39 before decreasing to 2.9% among those aged 45-49.

However, percentages across regions and provinces show a considerable range and are at variance with the national values. Table 4.3.1a shows the highest values of women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 for each age cohort by region and province.

Table 4.3.1a Highest regional and provincial percentages of women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 by age compared to national percentage

Percentage of women who have experienced physical violence since age 15					
Age	Region with highest percentage	Regional Percentage	Province with highest percentage	Provincial percentage	National percentage
15-19	Highlands	44.7	Southern Highlands*	66.0	39.4
20-24	Southern	54.9	West New Britain	61.0	54.5
25-29	Southern	63.3	New Ireland	83.3	60.4
30-34	Islands*	73.4	West New Britain*	78.3	62.6
35-39	Highlands*	67.6	Enga*	90.9	62.1
40-44	Southern*	65.5	NCD*	92.9	60.7
45-49	Momase*	75.0	New Ireland*	84.6	54.1

* Age cohort is also the highest percentage of all age cohorts for region and province

At the regional level, Momase has the lowest percentage overall (51.3%) of women who have experienced physical violence but has the highest percentage among women aged 45-49 (75%). The Islands Region has the highest percentage overall (59.3%) and also has the highest percentage for ages 30-34 (73.4%).

At the provincial level, percentages of women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 range from a low of 41.7% in East Sepik to a high of 69.7% in Hela for all ages. New Ireland has the highest percentage for ages 25-29 (83.3%) and ages 44-49 (84.6%). West New Britain has the highest percentage for ages 20-24 (61%) and ages 30-34 (78.3%). Enga reports the highest percentage in the country for aged 35-39 (90.9%). The highest percentage of any age cohort is in the National Capital District (NCD), where 92.9% of women aged 40-44 have experienced violence since age 15.

Percentages of women who report having experienced physical violence *often* in the 12 months prior to the survey also reveal wide distribution across ages, regions, and provinces, ranging from a high of 9.9% for ages 15-19 in West Sepik to 28.6% for age 40-44 in NCD. Data on Enga indicates that no women experienced physical violence *often* in the 12 months prior to the survey, except for 11.1% for ages 40-44. However, percentages for Enga are consistently high in all age cohorts where women have experienced physical violence *sometimes* in the 12 months prior to the survey, with 72.7% for ages 35-39 being the highest.

Table 4.3.1b shows the highest values for each age cohort by regions and provinces for women who reported experiencing physical violence *often* in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Table 4.3.1b Highest regional and provincial percentages for women who reported experiencing physical violence often in the 12 months prior to the survey compared to national percentage

Percentage of women who have experienced physical violence often in the last 12 months					
Age	Region with highest percentage	Regional Percentage	Province with highest percentage	Provincial percentage	National percentage
15-19	Southern	4.7	West Sepik*	9.9	3.4
20-24	Highlands	7.6	Southern Highlands*	21.1	5.9
25-29	Southern*	7.7	Central*	24.4	6.0
30-34	Highlands*	17.9	Eastern Highlands*	26.6	11.4
35-39	Momase*	10.9	Madang*	13.3	6.5
40-44	Southern	6.4	NCD*	28.6	5.6
45-49	Islands	5.2	AROB*	21.4	2.9

* Age cohort is also highest percentage of all age cohorts for region and province

Residence

The DHS found that the percentage of women who have experienced physical violence is slightly higher in urban areas than in rural areas (57% versus 55%).⁷ Similar findings are found at the regional level except for in Momase where more women in rural areas have experienced physical violence (51.5% versus 50.6%).

The distribution between urban and rural residences becomes more variable at the provincial level, as would be expected, given that PNG's population resides predominantly in rural areas and most survey respondents were from rural areas.

Nonetheless, data from some provinces suggest that an increased level of violence is associated with urban residence. Northern Province, where the overall percentage of women who have experienced physical violence is comparatively low (45.1%), shows a strong difference between urban and rural residents (72.2% versus 42.2%). Western Highlands also has a strong difference (72.2% versus 48.6%).

Marital status

The DHS found that divorced, separated, or widowed women are more likely to have experienced physical violence (70%) than currently married women (63%) and never-married women (30%).⁸

The range of percentages varies across categories at the regional and provincial levels with some notable differences in the national values. Momase region has the lowest percentages for all three categories (never-married 22.3%; currently married 61.1%; and divorced, separated, or widowed women 59.4%). The Islands Region has the highest percentages for never-married (39.5%) and currently married women who have experienced violence (66.3%), whereas the Highlands has the highest percentage for divorced, separated, or widowed women (76.7%).

The range of percentages for provinces shows further variation from both national and regional values. Women who have never-married and have experienced physical violence ranges from a low in Chimbu (5.7%) to a high in Milne Bay (57.7%). Women who are currently married and have experienced violence ranges from a low in East Sepik (51.1%) to a high in New Ireland (75.9%).

⁷ DHS, p. 291.

⁸ DHS, p. 291.

Madang has the lowest percentage of divorced, separated, or widowed women who have experienced violence (40%), whereas Enga and Manus both have the highest percentage for divorced, separated, or widowed women (100%).

The significantly low percentage in Chimbu of never-married women to have experienced physical violence (5.7%) rises dramatically for women who are married (60.5%) and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed (94.4%). This pattern suggests a strong association between marriage and the likelihood of experiencing physical violence, which also might be related to the meaning and practice of bride price exchanges in this context.

The Number of Living Children

The DHS found that women with at least one child are more likely than those with no living children to have experienced physical violence. For example, 63% of women with one or two children have experienced physical violence, as compared with 41% of women with no living children.⁹

These values also show significant variation at the regional level. Again, Momase has the lowest percentages for the first three categories (no living children 30.6%; 1-2 children 60.6%; 3-4 children 61.6%). Southern has the highest percentage of women with one or two children who have experienced physical violence (64.5%) and three or four children (68.3%), but the lowest percentage of all provinces of women who have five or more children (48.1%). The Highlands has the highest percentage of women with no living children to have experienced physical violence (45.8%). The Islands is the only region to have a higher percentage of women with five or more children to have experienced physical violence (71.9%) than the national percentage (56.8%).

At the provincial level, percentages of number of children in relation to the experience of violence also vary considerably. Women with no living children who have experienced physical violence ranges from a low in Madang (23.2%) to a high in Hela (74.25). Women with one or two children ranges from a low in East Sepik (48.4%) to a high in West New Britain (78%). AROB has the lowest percentage of women with three or four children to have experienced physical violence (51.3%) while NCD has the highest (81.5%).

Nine provinces show a significant drop in percentages for women with five or more children, which suggests that in some contexts a higher number of children might be a mitigating factor against physical violence. This factor might also possibly influence fertility preferences for women, although the DHS found that the total wanted fertility rate has remained constant at 3.0 since 2006.¹⁰ This is most apparent in Milne Bay where the percentage of women with three or four children who have experienced violence (74.1%) drops sharply for women with five or more children (38.9%).

The percentages from Central also illustrate this pattern with a big increase from no living children (35.6%) to one or two children (73.5%), which is the second highest percentage of all provinces, and three or four children (70.9%), followed by a significant decrease at five or more children (44.7%). This suggests an association between the transition to marriage and childbearing and the likelihood of experiencing physical violence for women in Central province.

Employment

⁹ DHS, p. 291.

¹⁰ DHS, p. 96.

The DHS found that the experience of physical violence is more common among employed women, irrespective of whether they are employed for cash (60%) or not for cash (62%), than among women who are not employed (53%).¹¹

The same pattern is apparent at the regional and provincial levels but with significant variation. At the regional level, women who are employed for cash and who experience physical violence ranges from a low in Momase region (50.4%) to a high in the Highlands region (69.4%). This is contrasted by a low in the Highlands region of women who are employed not for cash and who experience physical violence (59.1) and a high in the Southern region (68.5%).

At the provincial level, ranges show a low in West Sepik (35.0%) and AROB (35.0%) to a high in Gulf (83.3%) and in Enga (100%) for women who are employed for cash and who experience physical violence, and a low in Chimbu (43.3%) and a high in NCD (94.1%) for women who are employed not for cash and who experience physical violence.

For women who are not employed and who experience physical violence, the regional range is from a low in Momase (49.5%) to a high in the Islands (57.6%). At the provincial level the range is from a low in Northern (37.2%) to a high in Hela (71.7%).

The distribution of values at the regional and provincial levels undoubtedly reflects important associations with employment opportunities, employment sector and position, the degree to which women are involved in financial decision-making at the household level, and whether or not women have access to banking facilities and financial services for income management.

Education

The DHS found that women with a higher education are most likely to have experienced physical violence (62%).¹² This finding is most apparent in data from the Momase region where 90.0% of women with higher education have experienced physical violence, and in the province of Morobe where 95.7% of women with higher education have experienced violence.

By contrast, the lowest regional percentage for women with higher education who have experienced physical violence is found in Southern (45.3%), although it has the highest percentage of women with secondary education who have experienced physical violence (61.6%). Chimbu has the lowest percentage (4.3%) among provinces, followed by Hela (7.3%), of women with secondary education who have experienced physical violence. Interestingly, NCD shows a relatively low percentage of women with higher education who have experienced physical violence (23.4%), given that the population in NCD has greater access to higher education opportunities than other parts of the country.

The Highlands region has the highest percentage of women with no education who have experienced physical violence (57.7%) as well as women with elementary education (61.3%) and primary education (60.7%). However, the Highlands has the lowest percentage of women with secondary education who have experienced physical violence (51.6%). Momase has the lowest percentages for no education (49%), elementary (29.9%), and secondary education (46.6%), in sharp contrast to having the highest percentage of all regions for higher education.

At the provincial level, percentages of women with no education who have experienced physical violence ranges from a low in Manus (22.3%) to a high in New Ireland (84.9%). Madang has the lowest percentage for women with elementary education who have experienced physical violence (8.8%), whereas East New Britain has the highest (98.1%).

¹¹ DHS, p. 291. See DHS p. 39 for explanation of employment categories.

¹² DHS, p. 291.

The lowest percentage for women with primary education who have experienced physical violence is found in East Sepik (39.5%) and the highest is in NCD (79.2%). For secondary education, the range is from a low in Chimbu (33.9%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (75.6%).

Wealth quintile

The DHS found that women in the highest wealth quintile (58%) are most likely to report experiencing physical violence.¹³ The pattern at regional and provincial levels shows a relatively even spread across quintiles. The broadest regional range is found in the lowest wealth quintile between Momase (42.4%) and the Islands region (70.1%).

At the provincial level, the range of percentages of women in the highest wealth quintile to have experienced physical violence is from a low in Chimbu (12.5%) to a high in Milne Bay (78.6%).

Stark contrasts are apparent at the provincial level within regions. For instance, New Ireland ranges from 0.0% of women in the lowest wealth quintile who experience physical violence to 71.4% in the highest wealth quintile. By contrast, East New Britain shows that 100.0% of women in the lowest wealth quintile have experienced physical violence compared to 60% of women in the highest wealth quintile.

Understanding the significance of wealth in relation to the experience of violence requires further contextual analysis on economic factors including access to opportunities for income-generation, household decisions regarding purchasing and consumption, as well as wealth redistribution related to social obligations.

Related analysis is presented in Section 5.1 below which discusses findings from Table 16.3 on persons committing physical violence.

4.3.2 Specification set based on Table 16.2 *Experience of violence during pregnancy*

Table 16.2 of the DHS shows that 18% of women who have ever been pregnant experienced violence during pregnancy and that violence during pregnancy is most common among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed (24%), and among women in Eastern Highlands (32%) and New Ireland (30%).¹⁴

While the DHS survey questionnaire did not ask respondents whether the experience of violence was related to unintended (unwanted or mistimed) pregnancy, violence during pregnancy is likely to be associated with fertility preferences and the unmet need for contraception. Furthermore, the likelihood of an unwanted pregnancy tends to be higher for women with a history of violence in their current relationship.¹⁵

DHS findings show that the wanted fertility rate is 3.0 children, as compared with the actual total fertility rate of 4.2 children, and that one-quarter of currently married women (26%) have an unmet need for family planning.¹⁶ Interestingly, the DHS found that the percentage of women who want no more children is lowest among those with a higher education and those in the highest wealth quintile.¹⁷

¹³ DHS, pp. 290-291.

¹⁴ DHS, p. 300.

¹⁵ Hindin et.al., 2008.

¹⁶ DHS, pp. 94, 103.

¹⁷ DHS, p. 94

Age

At the national level, women's experience of violence during pregnancy is highest for ages 15-19 and 25-29, which both show 21.5%. There is a notable decrease between these two cohorts for women aged 20-24 (15.2%). There is another decrease among women aged 30-34 and age 35-39, which show 19.7% and 19.8% respectively, before dropping again to 12.1% for age 40-44 and 13.1% for age 45-49.

Percentages across regions and provinces show a considerable range and are at variance with the national values. For women aged 15-19, Momase has the lowest percentage of women who experience violence during pregnancy (14.3%) while the Islands has the highest (41.7%), which is also the highest for all age cohorts at the regional level. The Islands also shows the highest percentage of women aged 45-49 who experience violence during pregnancy (25.0%). For women aged 20-24, the range is from a low in Momase (5.6%) to a high in Southern (20.0%). This pattern reverses for women aged 25-29, where Southern drops to the lowest percentage (13.4%) and Momase increases to the highest percentage (31.3%). The Highlands has the highest percentages for women aged 30-34 (25.9%) and women aged 35-39 (22.0%).

At the provincial level, eight provinces show that no women aged 15-19 have experienced violence during pregnancy (Western, Chimbu, Hela, Western Highlands, Madang, East Sepik, New Ireland, AROB). However, three provinces have considerably high rates: Eastern Highlands (64.9%), West Sepik (69.3%), and West New Britain (91.2%).

Among women aged 20-24, the range is from a low in Jiwaka (1.8%) to a high in Northern (38.7%). For ages 25-29, Hela has the lowest percentage (3.8%) and Morobe has the highest (50.0%) of women who have experienced violence during pregnancy. For women aged 30-34, NCD has the lowest percentage (5.9%) and Eastern Highlands has the highest percentage (43.7%). West Sepik has the lowest percentage (4.2%) and New Ireland has the highest (43.9%) for women aged 40-44 who have experienced violence during pregnancy. For women aged 45-49, the range is from a low in Manus (2.9%) to a high in New Ireland (47.3%).

The variance of age in relation to the experience of violence during pregnancy makes it difficult to discern specific patterns across regions and provinces but fundamentally points to the importance of ensuring access to family planning and support services for women and their partners, beginning at an early age and continuing throughout a woman's reproductive life.

Further analysis of age in relation to the experience of violence and early pregnancy is presented in Section 7.3 below, which looks at teenage pregnancy and motherhood by the experience of physical violence and experience of sexual violence.

Residence

The DHS found that the percentage of women who have experienced violence during pregnancy is slightly higher in urban areas than in rural areas (18.9% versus 17.5%).¹⁸ At the regional level, urban residence ranges from a low in the Highlands (11.9%) to a high in the Islands region (25.6%), which also has the highest percentage of women in rural areas who experience violence during pregnancy (20.2%). The low in the Highlands possibly reflects an association with women's access to well-established antenatal services in some urban areas (in both Goroka, Eastern Highlands, and Mt Hagen, Western Highlands) offered by NGOs such as Susu Mamas and Care International. These services incorporate advocacy and awareness on GBV prevention and include outreach services to rural districts.¹⁹

¹⁸ DHS, p. 291.

¹⁹ For information on Susu Mamas see their website: <https://www.susumamas.org.pg/>

For information on Care International in PNG see <https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/CAREPNGStrtPln12to16.pdf>

However, provincial data reveals a considerable range for urban residence in the Highlands region, from a low in Western Highlands (5.8%) to a high in Enga (55.2%). This is also the widest range for all provinces. Highland provinces also show the widest range for rural residence, with a low in Jiwaka (8%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (33.7%). By contrast, Eastern Highlands has a relatively low percentage for urban residence (9.1%) whereas Jiwaka has a high percentage for the urban residents who experience violence during pregnancy (31.4%).

In addition to Enga, 12 other provinces have higher percentages for urban residence than the national percentage for women who have experienced violence during pregnancy. These range between Western (19.0%) and West New Britain (39.2%). For rural residence, nine additional provinces have higher percentages than the national percentage, which range from a low in Hela (17.9%) to a high in New Ireland (33.7%).

Marital status

At the national level, violence during pregnancy is most common among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed (24%). There is, once again, a considerable range at the regional level between marital categories, with a low in Momase for never-married women (4.3%) to a high in the Islands for women who are divorced, separated, or widowed (30.2%).

At the provincial level, variation is even greater. Thirteen provinces show 0.0% among never-married women who have experienced violence during pregnancy, whereas Gulf has 50%. Among married women who have experienced violence during pregnancy, the range is from a low in Jiwaka (8.5%) to a high in New Ireland (31.7%). Three provinces show 0.0% among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed who have experienced violence during pregnancy, while Chimbu has a high of 60.5%.

Number of living children

Of particular concern in relation to the experience of violence during pregnancy is data that reveals high percentages of women with no living children, indicating the effects of physical trauma on maternal and child health outcomes. The national percentage is 17.6% and percentages for regions range from a low in the Southern (13.8%) to a high in the Islands (28.6%), which is also the highest percentage at the regional level for all categories. While ten provinces show 0.0% among women with no living children, Western and West Sepik both show 50%. For provinces in the Islands region, high percentages are found in New Ireland (37.1%) and West New Britain (36.25%).

Comparative data at the provincial level shows stark variations for individual provinces. These include an overall low in Chimbu (4.8%) among women with 1-2 living children, but a high among women with 3-4 children (39.7%). NCD has the lowest percentage among women with 3-4 children (7.4%), but New Ireland has the highest percentage among women with 5+ children (35.7%).

Employment

Data on employment in relation to the experience of violence during pregnancy also shows significant variation at both the regional and provincial levels. At the regional level, women who are employed for cash and who experience violence during pregnancy ranges from low in Southern Region (11.2%) to high in the Islands region (23.4%). This is contrasted by a low in the Islands region of women who are employed not for cash and who experience violence (9.1%) and a high in the Highlands (25.3%).

At the provincial level, ranges show a low in East Sepik (3.0%) to a high in West New Britain (45.1%) for women who are employed for cash and who experience violence during pregnancy, and a low in Jiwaka (1.0%) and a high in Eastern Highlands (42.7%) for women who are employed not for cash and who experience violence during pregnancy.

Among women who are not employed and who experience violence during pregnancy the range at the regional level is from a low in Momase (14.1%) to a high in the Islands (22.3%). At the provincial level, the range is from a low in Madang (2.2%) to a high in New Ireland (35.2%).

Education

National data shows that the experience of violence during pregnancy is most common among women who have secondary education (21.1%). The highest percentage at the regional level is in the Highlands among women with higher education (40%).

While four provinces show 0.0% among women with no education and women with elementary education who have experienced violence during pregnancy, New Ireland has the highest percentages among both women with no education (80%) and women with elementary education (64.1%).

Seven provinces have 0.0% among women with higher education, but this is offset by Eastern Highlands, which has the highest percentage among women with higher education who have experienced violence during pregnancy (80.9%). This high percentage is in stark contrast to the relatively low percentage for urban residents in Eastern Highlands (9.1%), where presumably most women with higher education would be residing. The variation in data indicates the complexity of intersecting factors related to the experience of violence.

Wealth quintile

Regional and provincial data show considerable variation in the association between wealth quintile and the experience of violence during pregnancy. Of the four regions, the Islands has the lowest percentage for the lowest quintile (7.7%) and the highest percentages for the second (23.1%), fourth (21.6), and highest (23.2 %) quintiles. The regional range for the middle quintile is 13.1% in Southern to 26% in the Highlands. At the provincial level, ranges are vast with NCD having 0.0% for the second quintile whereas New Ireland has 100%.

4.3.3 Specification set based on Table 16.4 *Experience of sexual violence*

The DHS findings show that 28% of women age 15-49 have ever experienced sexual violence, and 20% experienced sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey.²⁰ Table 16.4 provides percentages of the experience of sexual violence by regions and provinces but presents data by background characteristics for the national level only.

At the regional level, women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced sexual violence ranges from low in Southern

²⁰ DHS, p. 291.

DHS Findings on Sexual Violence

Among ever-married women who have experienced sexual violence, 77% report their current husband as the perpetrator, while 19% report a former husband as the perpetrator. Among women who have never been married, current or former boyfriends (66%), relatives (16%), and strangers (6%) are the most common perpetrators of sexual violence (Table 16.6).

Women most commonly reported that their husband used physical force to have sexual intercourse with them when they did not want to (28%). Fifteen percent of women reported that their husband physically forced them to perform other sexual acts they did not want to, and 14% say that their husband forced them with threats or in other ways to perform sexual acts they did not want to (DHS p. 294).

region (24.4%) to high in the Highlands (31.8%). The range at the regional level among women aged 15-49 who experienced sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey is from a low in the Islands (16.4%) to a high in Momase (22.1%).

Among provinces, Northern has the lowest percentages for both women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced sexual violence (18.5%) and women aged 15-49 who experienced sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey (11.4%). The highest percentages are found in Hela among women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced sexual violence (41.5%) and in East Sepik among women aged 15-49 who experienced sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey (26.2%).

The specification set allows for further analysis of data by background characteristics at the regional and provincial levels.

Age

The DHS found that 11% percent of women had experienced sexual violence by age 22, while 6% had experienced sexual violence by age 18 (Table 16.5).²¹ Overall at the national level, Table 16. 4 shows that the experience of sexual violence is highest among women aged 30-39 (36% ever and 26.7% in the last 12 months).

Analysis of the specification set of data at the regional and provincial levels shows considerable variation in the pattern of age distribution among women who have ever experienced sexual violence, with the specification set based on five-year age cohorts. This variation is found both between provinces across regions and between provinces within the same region. However, among these variations, ranges show consistently high percentages for women of all age groups (see Table 4.3.3a). DHS findings indicate overwhelmingly that sexual violence is perpetrated by a woman's current spouse within marriage (77%). This finding together with the consistently high levels of women who have ever experienced sexual violence in all age cohorts indicates the seriousness of intimate partner violence for women in Papua New Guinea.

Table 4.3.3a Widest ranges between provinces across regions and between provinces within the same region among women who have ever experienced sexual violence by age cohort

Age	Widest provincial range across regions		Widest provincial range within regions		PNG (%)
	Lowest (%)	Highest (%)	Lowest (%)	Highest (%)	
15-19	Madang (0.0)	Morobe (33.3)	Madang (0.0)	Morobe (33.3)	14.8
20-24	Morobe (9.3)	Hela (60.8)	Western H'lands (15.4)	Hela (60.8)	24.3
25-29	Northern (8.7)	Eastern H'lands (55.7)	Northern (8.7)	Milne Bay (44.4)	34.2
30-34	Central and Northern (16.7)	Chimbu (60.5)	Jiwaka (25.9)	Chimbu (60.5)	35.2
35-39	NCD (13.3)	Morobe (53.2)	AROB (14.3)	West New Britain (46.7)	37.0
40-44	East New Britain (5.6)	Enga (44.4)	Eastern H'lands (13.0)	Enga (44.4)	26.6
45-49	Western H'lands and Gulf (0.0)	Chimbu (63.6)	Western H'lands (0.0)	Chimbu (63.6)	30.7

Residence

²¹ DHS, p. 291.

Table 16.4 shows that 30.0% of women of all ages who have ever experienced sexual violence are now residing in an urban area, whereas 27.9% reside in a rural area. All regions show a similar breakdown, except for the Islands region where rural residence (25.5%) is slightly higher than urban residence (25.0%). Overall, 14 provinces out of 22 have a higher percentage of urban residence for women of all ages who have ever experienced sexual violence. Only Momase region has more provinces (three out of four) where most women who have ever experienced sexual violence reside in a rural area, although the region as a whole shows a higher percentage for urban residence.

Marital status

The DHS found that divorced, separated, or widowed women of all ages are much more likely to have experienced sexual violence (44%) than currently married women (33%) and never-married women (11%).²²

This pattern is apparent at the regional level as well and is particularly striking for the Highlands region, where the risk of sexual violence increases dramatically for women who are currently married or divorced, separated, or widowed. The range for the Highlands is from 9.3% among never-married women of all ages, which is the lowest percentage overall for this category, to 36.7% among women currently married, and 46.7% among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed.

However, variability is also quite significant between provinces in the Highlands region. Western Highlands and Hela both have 0.0% among women of all ages who have never-married and who have ever experienced sexual violence, compared to Jiwaka for the same category (33.3%). Then Hela increases dramatically among women who are currently married (43.9%), which is also the highest percentage overall in the country for this category and indicates the degree to which marriage involves the risk of sexual violence for women in Hela.

Western Highlands also increases among women who are currently married and who have ever experienced sexual violence (28.5%) but then drops again to 0.0% among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed. This is in stark contrast with Chimbu, which has the highest percentage (77.8%) for the Highlands region among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed, and is also the highest overall in the country.

In Southern Region, Central shows a similar increase among women who have never-married and who have ever experienced sexual violence (2.9%) to currently married women (35.3%), before decreasing among women who are divorced, single or widowed (29.4%).

Overall, the differences at the provincial level show an important degree of variation from the national percentages. Five provinces have a lower percentage among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed and who have ever experienced violence than women who are currently married (Central, Southern Highlands, Western Highlands Eastern Highlands, and East New Britain).

Analysis of the differences between percentages among women of all ages who have ever experienced violence and women who have experienced sexual violence in the last twelve months by marital status shows a consistent decrease across all regions and provinces between women who are currently married and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed. The exceptions are found in three provinces (Central, NCD, and Manus) where the percentages remain the same.

Several provinces show a dramatic decrease in the percentage of women who have experienced sexual violence in the last twelve months among women who are divorced, separated, or widowed. These include Enga (from 60% to 20%), Hela (from 70.6% to 32.4%),

²² DHS, p. 291.

and West New Britain (from 53.8% to 15.4%). These decreases suggest that whether sexual violence is experienced as a singular incident that a woman carries throughout her life or is experienced as a recurring event throughout the life cycle, changes in the circumstances in marital life can significantly reduce the likelihood of sexual violence for many women.

Number of living children

At the national level, the association between the number of living children a woman has and whether she has ever experienced sexual violence ranges from 18.7% for 0 children, to 31.7% for 1-2 children, to 32.8% for 3-4 children, and a high of 32.9% for 5+ children.

Regional data shows a similar pattern to national findings but with the Highlands consistently highest of all four regions across all categories. Data at the provincial level reveals significant variation. The wide ranges between provinces include a low in Madang (1.2%) to a high in Enga (40.4%) among women who have no living children and who have ever experienced sexual violence; a low in Gulf (14.8%) and a high in Hela (54.5) among women who have 1-2 children; a low in NCD (18.5%) to a high in Chimbu (48.3%) among women who have 3-4 children; and a low in Southern Highlands (16.7%) to a high in AROB (50.0%).

Interpretation of the data is difficult in terms of drawing associations between sexual violence and reproductive outcomes but nonetheless, these findings underscore the significance of sexual violence in understanding the intersecting issues that affect women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Employment

The DHS findings show that the experience of sexual violence is more common among employed women, irrespective of whether they are employed for cash (32%) or not for cash (38%), than among women who are not employed (25%).²³

This pattern holds true for the regional and provincial levels with some notable variation. At the regional level, women who are employed for cash and who experience sexual violence ranges from low in Southern region (21.5%) to high in the Highlands region (42.8%). Among women who are employed not for cash and who experience sexual violence, the range is from a low in the Islands (34.7%) to a high in Momase (44.7%). Among women who are not employed and who experience sexual violence, the range is from low in Southern (19.6%) to high in the Highlands (29.1%).

At the provincial level, Northern stands out as having the lowest percentage among women who are not employed (10.1%) to a high among women who are employed not for cash (63.0%). For women who are employed for cash, the provincial range is from a low in NCD (4.0%) to a high in Enga (71.4%).

Interpretation of these findings suggests a possible association between women's economic empowerment through employment opportunities and financial control over income earned and the increased risk of sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. The low percentage of women employed for cash in NCD indicates a possible contextual factor where the formal economy is predominant in people's livelihoods and has a less direct effect on levels of sexual violence.

Education

²³ DHS, p. 291.

The national findings show that women with elementary education are more likely to experience sexual violence than other women (31%).²⁴ Of all education levels, the highest regional percentage is in Momase among women with elementary education (33.3%). Regional ranges for all categories show that Southern has the lowest percentages for no education (19.7%), elementary (28.6%) and primary (22.5%), but the highest percentage for secondary education (32.8%). The Highlands has the highest percentages for no education (32.4%), primary (32.9%), and higher education (41.4%).

Significant ranges are apparent at the provincial level. These include a low in AROB (6.6%) among women with no education who have ever experienced sexual violence to a high in New Ireland (73%). Western Highlands and East New Britain both have 0.0% among women with elementary education who have ever experienced sexual violence, while Enga has a high of 63.4%. For primary education, the range is from a low in East New Britain (15.7%) to a high in Chimbu (40.7%). The high in Enga for elementary education is offset by a low for secondary education (6.7%), which contrasts with a high in Central (39.2%). For higher education, the range is from a low in Morobe (1.8%) to a high in East New Britain (89.4%). To some extent, these ranges no doubt reflect contextual variations in the availability and access to educational opportunities as much as they reveal an association between education levels and the experience of sexual violence.

Wealth quintile

DHS Table 16.4 shows that the second wealth quintile has the lowest percentage (25.2%) and the fourth wealth quintile has the highest percentage (31.9%) among women of all ages who have ever experienced sexual violence.

Regional and provincial data show considerable variation in the association between the wealth quintile and the experience of sexual violence. Of the four regions, the Islands has the lowest percentages for three quintiles (low 12.5%, second 14.8%, fourth 26.1%), and the Highlands has the highest percentages for three quintiles (low 35.3%, middle 34.4%, fourth 38.9%). The regional range for the high quintile is from a low in Momase (22.1%) to a high in Southern (28.6%).

At the provincial level, ranges are vast even between provinces in the same region. For instance, the range for the second quintile is from a low in East New Britain (4.8%) to a high in New Ireland (43.9%). For the fourth quintile, the range is from a low in Chimbu (4.7%) to a high in Jiwaka (64.9%), which is also the highest percentage for all quintiles. Hela has the highest percentages for the low quintile (50.7%) and the middle quintile (61.7%).

For cross-reference on this data, see also Section 5.2 Specification set based on Table 16.6 Persons committing sexual violence.

DHS Findings on Marital Control

Forty-six percent of ever-married women report that their husband is jealous or angry if they talk to other men, 43% report that he insists on knowing where they are at all times, 39% say that he frequently accuses them of being unfaithful, 31% report that he does not permit them to meet female friends, and 23% say that he tries to limit their contact with their families. Thirty-seven percent of women report that their husband displays three or more of these behaviours, while 43% say that their husband displays none of the behaviours (Table 16.8).

Women's fear of their husbands and controlling behaviours by husbands are highly correlated. Only 16% of women who say that they are never afraid of their husband report experiencing at least three controlling behaviours, as compared with 81% of women who say that they are afraid of their husband most of the time (DHS, p. 292-93).

²⁴ DHS, p. 292.

4.3.4 Specification set based on Table 16.8 *Marital control exercised by husbands*

Marital controlling behaviours exercised by men over women are associated with violence in the relationship. The DHS asked ever-married women whether their husband or partner demonstrated at least one of the following five controlling behaviours: is jealous or angry if she talks to other men, frequently accuses her of being unfaithful, does not permit her to meet her female friends, tries to limit her contact with her family, and insists on knowing where she is at all times.

Because the concentration of controlling behaviours is more significant than the exercise of any single behaviour, the DHS also measured the proportion of women whose husbands demonstrated at least three of the specified behaviours.

In addition to the standard set of background characteristics used in the survey, the DHS asked women if they were afraid of their husband/partner most of the time, some of the time, or never afraid, and these were measured against controlling behaviours.

Table 16.8 provides percentages of the experience of husbands' marital control by regions and provinces but presents data by background characteristics for the national level only.

At the regional level, women age 15-49 who report that their husband displays three or more of the specific behaviours ranges from a low in Southern (34.9%) to a high in Momase (42.2%). Momase also reports the highest percentages of three of the five controlling behaviours ('is jealous or angry if she talks to other men': 49.0%; 'frequently accuses her of being unfaithful': 41.5%; 'does not permit her to meet her female friends': 37.1%). Additionally, Momase has the highest percentage of women who say that they are afraid of their husband/partner most of the time (88.2%).

This pattern for Momase region is in sharp contrast to the findings related to the experience of physical violence among women aged 15-49, where Momase has the lowest percentage overall (51.3%). The association between controlling behaviours and physical violence is well-established by global evidence.²⁵ However, the Momase pattern suggests that other significant factors are influencing intimate partner violence and that while controlling behaviours constitute a form of violence they may not always manifest in physical violence.

By comparison, the Highlands region shows the lowest percentages for three of the controlling behaviours ('frequently accuses her of being unfaithful': 36.2%; 'tries to limit her contact with her family': 21.3%; and 'insists on knowing where she is at all times': 40.9%) but has high levels among women who have ever experienced physical violence by background characteristics. Examining these variables more closely in relation to contextual factors would contribute to a better understanding of the power dynamics of intimate pattern violence as experienced by women in Papua New Guinea.

At the national and regional levels, the two single controlling behaviours that consistently show the highest percentages across all background characteristics are 'is jealous or angry if she talks to other men' and 'insists on knowing where she is at all times.' The controlling behaviour where the husband 'tries to limit her contact with her family' has the consistently lowest percentages overall and these values decrease notably for women of older ages and those who have a higher number of living children.

The specification set allows for a closer analysis of controlling behaviours at the regional and provincial level by background characteristics. Values are variable across all characteristics and categories of behavior both between and within regions, which makes the discernment of

²⁵ Kishor, Sunita and Kiersten Johnson. 2004. *Profiling Domestic Violence – A Multi-Country Study*. Calverton, Maryland: ORC Macro, pp. 68-71.

patterns difficult. However, some significant observations stand out at the provincial level, which are highlighted below.

Age

At the national level, the DHS found that younger women are more likely than older women to report that their husbands display three or more of the specified behaviours. For instance, 56% of ever-married women aged 15-19 say that their husbands display three or more of the behaviours, as compared with 30% of women aged 40-49. Given the association between controlling behaviours and intimate partner violence, this finding is consistent with the DHS finding that a large proportion of spousal violence begins within the first two years of marriage.²⁶

The exception to this pattern at the regional level is found in Momase where the highest percentage is among women aged 20-24 who say that their husbands display three or more of the behaviours (68.5%). The pattern in Momase shows a decrease to an overall low of 27.0% for ages 30-34 followed by an increase for ages 35-39 (34.2%) and age 40-44 (38.6%) before decreasing again for ages 45-49 (27.8%).

Eleven provinces show that three or more controlling behaviours are considerably higher among women aged 15-19. The highest percentages are found in West New Britain (92.2%), West Sepik (90.5%), and NCD (87.1%). Notable variations to this pattern at the provincial level include five provinces which have higher percentages for three or more controlling behaviours among women aged 20-24, with the highest in Morobe (79.4%). Two provinces in the Southern region show three or more controlling behaviours are highest among women aged 40-44. These are Western (42.9%) and Gulf (44.9%).

All regions show notable fluctuation between age cohorts and specific controlling behaviours. At the provincial level, variability between age cohorts and specific controlling behaviours becomes even more pronounced. For instance, percentages for Western are highest overall for women aged 40-44 whose husband/partner 'frequently accuses her of being unfaithful' (57.1%) and 'insists on knowing where she is at all times' (57.1%). However, age 35-39 has one of the lowest percentages of all ages and provinces for the controlling behaviour of 'tries to limit her contact with her family' (5.9%).

Chimbu shows significantly high percentages for all age cohorts across all controlling behaviours but with a noticeable increase for age 30-34 in four of the five controlling behaviours. The lowest percentage overall is among women aged 44-49 whose husband/partner 'tries to limit her contact with her family' (11.0%), whereas the highest percentage overall is among women aged 15-19 whose husband/partner 'insists on knowing where she is at all times' (78.5%).

The highest percentage overall for the behaviour 'is jealous or angry if she talks to other men' is found among women aged 15-19 in New Ireland (92.8%). While this percentage decreases with for women in older age cohorts, it remains persistently high and increases to 58.3% for women age 45-49.

Residence

Table 16.8 shows that among women of all ages who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours, 38.7% reside in an urban area and 37.2% reside in a rural area. The distribution between urban and rural residence is consistent across all specific

²⁶ DHS, p. 295.

controlling behaviours. The largest difference is for the behaviour 'insists on knowing where she is at all times,' where urban residence is 50.6% and rural residence is 42.3%.

All regions show a similar distribution, except for Momase where rural residence (42.8%) is slightly higher than urban residence (39.1%) among women who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours. Overall, 13 provinces out of 22 have a higher percentage of urban residence for women of all ages. This ranges from a low in Western (27.8%) to a high in Southern Highlands (83.3%) among women who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours. The range for rural residence is from a low in Enga (30.1%) to a high in Morobe (63.9%) among women of all ages who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours.

Marital Status

Table 16.8 shows a consistent pattern across all five specific controlling behaviours and three or more behaviours where divorced, separated, or widowed women are more likely than currently married women to report that they have been subjected to these behaviours demonstrated by their former husband/partner. The difference in marital status is most apparent for the behaviour 'insists on knowing where she is at all times,' with currently married at 42.4% and divorced/separated/widowed at 52.1%.

However, percentages at the regional level show some variability for three or more controlling behaviours, where Momase has a higher value among currently married women than women who are divorced/separated/widowed who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours (42.6% to 36.2%). The widest range for a specific controlling behaviour is found in Southern region where 62.8% of women who are divorced/separated/widowed report that their former husband/partner 'insists in knowing where she is at all times' compared to 40.2% of currently married women.

The range of percentages for provinces shows further variation from both national and regional values. Overall, 15 provinces have higher values among women who are divorced/separated/widowed than currently married women who report that their (former) husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours. These range from a low in Western (30.8%) to a high in both Gulf (83.3%) and Eastern Highlands (83.3%). Among currently married women, Morobe has the highest percentage of women who report that their husband/partner displays three or more controlling behaviours (59.2%).

The difference in marital status is most pronounced for NCD where the percentage of women who are divorced/separated/widowed is consistently higher by a large margin across all controlling behaviours than for currently married women. This contrasts with several provinces where percentages for single controlling behaviours are markedly higher among currently married women (Western Highlands, Hela, Morobe, Madang, New Ireland).

Number of living children

Table 16.8 shows that the percentage of women whose husband/partner demonstrates specific controlling behaviours, as well as three or more of these behaviours, decreases consistently with the number of living children from 0 to 5+. The highest percentage overall is among women with 0 living children who report that their husband/partner 'is jealous or angry if she talks to other men' (58.2%). The lowest percentage overall is among women with 5+ children who report that their husband/partner 'tries to limit her contact with her family' (19%).

The same pattern is apparent for regions with some minor fluctuation between the number of living children for some single controlling behaviours. However, Momase shows a distinct contrast to this pattern, where higher percentages are reported for single controlling behaviours, as well as three or more behaviours, among women with 1-2 children and 3-4

children over that of 0 children and 5+ children. The only controlling behaviour that increases again between 3-4 children and 5+ children is 'tries to limit contact with her family' (24.4%).

Data at the provincial level shows considerable variation for individual provinces, both within and between regions, when comparing the highest percentages for number of living children by three or more controlling behaviours. Ten provinces show that three or more controlling behaviours are higher among women with no living children, and these include five provinces from the Highlands region. The range is from a low in Jiwaka (23.1%) to a high in Central (75.3%). Six provinces show that three or more controlling behaviours are higher among women with 1-2 children, with a range from a low in Western (36.7%) to a high in Morobe (72.1%). Only two provinces show highest percentages among women with 3-4 children. These are Milne Bay (43.2%) and Northern (50.0%). Four provinces have the highest percentages among women with 5+ children who report their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours. The range is from a low in Enga (36.4%) to a high in West New Britain (43.6%).

Employment

The DHS findings show that ever-married women's experience of three or more marital controlling behaviours by their husband/partner is more common among employed women, irrespective of whether they are employed for cash (37.1%) or not for cash (41.2%), than among women who are not employed (36.3%). At the national level, the single two controlling behaviours that show the highest percentages among women who are employed for cash, employed not for cash, and not employed are 'is jealous or angry if she talks to other men' and 'insists on knowing where she is at all times.'

The regional level shows some slight variation from national values. In general, percentages are distributed evenly across categories of employment. For Southern region, percentages for all single controlling behaviours are higher among women employed not for cash followed by not employed, except for the behaviour 'insists on knowing where she is at all times', which is slightly higher among women employed for cash than not employed (41.7% to 39.6%). Momase shows that more women who are not employed report that their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours (48.7%).

At the provincial level, variation across categories of employment and controlling behaviours is more pronounced. Ten provinces have higher percentages among women who are employed not for cash who report that their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours. This ranges from a low in Madang (43.1%) to a high in Northern (76.0%). Six provinces have higher percentages among women who are employed for cash who report that their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours. This ranges from a low in Western Highlands (40.0%) to a high in Hela (88.9%), which is also the highest overall. Among women who are not employed, six provinces have higher percentages for three or more controlling behaviours, which range from a low in Jiwaka (26.2%) to a high in Morobe (59.8%).

Interpretation of these findings requires further analysis of the association between women's economic activity and controlling behaviours exercised by an intimate partner.

Education

The DHS found that women with elementary or no education are less likely to experience controlling behaviours than other women.²⁷ This finding is consistent with the DHS finding where women with higher education are more likely to have experienced physical violence (62%).

²⁷ DHS, p. 292.

Once again, data from the Momase region show alarmingly high percentages across four single controlling behaviours ('is jealous or angry if she talks to other men': 98.1%; 'frequently accuses her of being unfaithful': 89.7%; 'does not permit her to meet her female friends' 89.7%; 'insists on knowing where she is at all times': 91.4%; and displays three or more controlling behaviours: 89.7%). The one exception is the behaviour 'tries to limit her contact with her family' where the percentage for Momase region drops dramatically to 1.7% among women with higher education.

The Highlands region shows a similar pattern where the highest percentages for four controlling behaviours are among women with higher education, while the behaviour 'tries to limit her contact with her family' is considerably lower (8.5%). This variable points to the importance of kinship and family ties as a protective measure against marital control in some contexts and could potentially serve as a positive theme for advocacy and prevention messages.

Seven provinces also have the highest percentages among women with higher education who report that their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours. This ranges from a low in East New Britain (31.5%) to a high in Morobe (96.5%). Six provinces have higher percentages among women with elementary education who report that their husband/partner exercises three or more controlling behaviours. This ranges from a low in West New Britain (44.2%) to a high in Milne Bay (83.7%).

Among women with primary education, five provinces have higher percentages for three or more controlling behaviours, which range from a low in Western (31.0%) to a high in Manus (50.0%). Three provinces show highest percentages among women with secondary education, ranging from a low in Gulf (42.9%) to a high in Hela (60.0%). West Sepik is the only province where the highest percentage of three or more controlling behaviours is among women with no education (39.8%).

Wealth quintile

The DHS found that women in the lowest wealth quintile are less likely to experience controlling behaviours than other women.²⁸ Data at the regional level is variable but generally follows this pattern.

Seven provinces have the highest percentages for three or more controlling behaviours among women in the fourth and highest wealth quintiles, whereas as only four provinces have the highest percentages in the second quintile and two provinces have the highest percentages in both the lowest and middle quintiles.

For the highest quintile, the range is from a low in East Sepik (38.1%) to a high in Morobe (83.2%). For the fourth quintile, the range is from a low in Southern

DHS Findings on Violence by Women against Spouse

Women who have themselves experienced spousal violence are much more likely than women who have not to have ever initiated violence against their husbands. Thirty-six percent of women who have experienced spousal violence have perpetrated such violence, as compared with 8% who have never experienced spousal violence.

Women's initiation of spousal physical violence varies with husbands' alcohol consumption, from 18% among women whose husbands do not drink to 40% among women whose husbands get drunk very often.

The percentage of women who have initiated spousal physical violence increases sharply with the number of controlling behaviours exhibited by their husbands, from 10% among women whose husbands do not display any of the specified controlling behaviours to 47% among women whose husbands display all five specified behaviours.

Women who have witnessed their father beating their mother (30%) are more likely to initiate violence themselves than those who have not witnessed such violence at home (18%).

Women who are afraid of their husband most of the time not only experience more violence but also are more likely to initiate violence: 33% of women who are afraid of their husband most of the time have initiated spousal violence, as compared with 17% of women who are never afraid of their husband (DHS Table 16.16 and p. 296-97).

²⁸ DHS, p.292.

Highlands (42.1%) to a high in Northern (53.8%). Among the four provinces in the second quintile, the range is from a low in Jiwaka (34.9%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (53.5%). The two provinces in the middle wealth quintile are Western (33.3%) and New Ireland (50.0%). The lowest wealth quintile includes Chimbu (59.8%) and AROB (82.1%).

Similar to data on the experience of physical violence, these findings indicate an important association between increased household wealth and the increased likelihood of controlling behaviours exercised by a woman's husband/partner.

4.3.5 Specification set based on Table 16.15 *Violence by women against their husband by women's background characteristics*

Acknowledging that either spouse can instigate intimate partner violence, the 2016-18 PNG DHS asked all ever-married women if they had initiated acts of physical violence against their husband when he was not already hitting or beating them.

Table 16.15 provides national percentages of ever-married women who have committed physical violence against their current or most recent husband/partner when he was not already beating or physically hurting them, ever and in the past 12 months, according to women's own experience of spousal violence and background characteristics. Percentages are also shown for regions and provinces but data on background characteristics is provided for the national level only.

DHS Table 16.16 presents national data on women who have ever committed violence against their husband/partner by husband's characteristics, women's empowerment indicators, and other variables (i.e., controlling behaviours exhibited by husband/partner; husband's alcohol consumption; witnessed father beating mother; fear of husband/partner) to identify associations. These are summarised in Text Box 6.

Findings from Table 16.15 show that 23% percent of women say that they had initiated violence against their husband/partner, and 17% reported initiating violence in the past 12 months.²⁹ Women in the Highlands region (28%) are more likely than women in other regions (17%-23%) to have initiated violence against their husband. By province, the proportion of women who have initiated violence against their husband ranges from a low of 12% each in Milne Bay and Southern Highlands to a high of 41% in Chimbu.³⁰

Among women who have never experienced spousal violence but who have perpetrated violence, the regional range is from a low in Momase (4.4%) to a high in the Highlands (13.4%). By province, the proportion of women who have never experienced spousal violence but who have initiated violence against their husband ranges from a low in Morobe (1.4%) to a high in Chimbu (23.8%).

The specification set based on Table 16.15 allows for closer analysis of women's background characteristics at the regional and provincial levels.

Age

The DHS found that at the national level women age 25-29 are more likely to have initiated violence against their husband (27.1%). Both Momase and Islands region also have the highest percentages in this age cohort (37.5% and 19.4%). For Southern region, women age 20-24 are more likely to have initiated violence against their husband (24.0%). For the Highlands, the highest percentage is among women aged 35-39 (36.8%), and the Highlands has the highest

²⁹ DHS, p. 296.

³⁰ DHS, p. 296.

percentages overall for all but two age cohorts. The Islands has the lowest percentages overall for all but three age cohorts.

Both Southern (11.5%) and the Highlands region show that women age 15-19 are least likely to have initiated violence against their husband (11.5% and 20.3%). For Momase and the Islands regions, the lowest percentages are among women aged 45-49 (10.0% and 10.3%).

Data at the provincial level shows considerable variation among age cohorts both within and between regions for women who have initiated violence against their husband/partner. Table 4.6.1 presents the lowest and highest percentages by age cohorts and provinces.

Six provinces show 0.0% for women age 15-19, which suggests that overall younger women are less likely to initiate violence against their husband/partner. However, a dramatic contrast to this pattern is found in Western Highlands (44.9%) and in NCD (70.0%) among women aged 15-19 who have initiated violence against their husband/partner. NCD has significantly high percentages in all age cohorts, where the lowest overall is among women aged 25-29 (26.7%). The data from NCD indicate the significance of a range of social factors specific to urban contexts which influence violent behaviour among the all age cohorts, but particularly among younger women.

Seven provinces have the highest percentage overall among women aged 20-24 (Gulf, Northern, Madang, East Sepik, East New Britain, West New Britain, AROB). These range from a low in West New Britain (22.2%) to a high in Northern (40.9%). Of note here is the dramatic increase in four provinces from 0.0% for age 15-19. In addition to Northern, which has the highest percentage overall, these provinces include Madang (38.6%), East Sepik (30.0%), and West New Britain (22.2%).

Provinces in the Highlands generally have higher percentages among women aged 30-34 and 35-39. Five provinces from three different regions (Southern Highlands, Western Highlands, Morobe, Manus, AROB) have the lowest percentages among women aged 45-49. However, the highest percentage overall for all age cohorts is found among women aged 45-49 in Hela (73.6%).

Table 4.6.1 Lowest and highest provincial percentages overall by age cohorts of ever-married women who have experienced spousal physical violence and who have also committed physical violence against their current or most recent husband/partner when he was not already physically hurting them, compared to national percentages

Age	Province				PNG %
	Lowest	%	Highest	%	
15-19	Milne Bay	0.0	NCD	70.0	16.9
	Northern				
	Enga				
	Madang				
	East Sepik				
	West New Britain				
20-24	New Ireland	5.0	Northern	40.9	21.0
25-29	Gulf	7.1	Morobe	49.5	27.1
30-34	Southern H'lands	2.2	Chimbu	64.3	22.9
35-39	West Sepik	9.1	Eastern H'lands	62.5	26.9
40-44	Jiwaka	5.3	Western	42.9	21.7
45-49	Southern H'lands	0.0	Hela	73.6	20.7
	Western H'lands				

DHS Table 16.16 shows that spousal age difference does not factor significantly in whether a woman initiates violence against her husband/partner, whether the wife is older (20.8%), the

same age (21.0%) or up to nine years younger (20.8%). However, where the woman is ten or more years younger than her husband/partner, the likelihood increases to 25.1%.³¹

Variations in age data suggest that understanding the factors that influence intimate partner violence requires closer consideration of how gender power dynamics fluctuate throughout the life cycle, as well as the meaning and place of violence within different social and cultural contexts, including its acceptance as an appropriate or expected response to marital discord or conflict.

Residence

The DHS found that at the national level, urban women are more likely to initiate violence against their husband/partner than rural women (32% versus 22%).³² All regions follow this pattern where women residing in urban areas are more likely to initiate violence against their husband/partner than women in rural areas. Percentages range from a low in Southern (30.5%) to a high in Momase (34.6%). Both regions have large urban provincial capitals (Port Moresby and Lae).

The high percentages in NCD and Morobe among women who have ever initiated violence against their husband (48.1% and 33.8%) no doubt contribute to larger percentages for urban residence. However, the pattern is noticeable in most provinces, where 15 out of 22 provinces report higher percentages among urban women, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (18.8%) to a high in Morobe (38.2%). This pattern points to the importance of stressors in urban contexts that contribute to marital discord and violence. That withstanding, Chimbu has the highest percentage overall for residence, either urban or rural, where 41.8% of rural women have ever initiated violence against their husband/partner.

Marital Status

The DHS found that divorced/separated/widowed women are more likely than currently married women to report having initiated violence against their husband/partner (39% versus 22%).³³ This pattern holds across regions except for the Islands, where more married women have initiated violence against their husband/partner (17.0%). Among divorced, separated, or widowed women, the range is from a low in Southern (24.4%) to a high in the Highlands (57.5%).

There is considerable variation in marital status at the provincial level among women who have ever initiated violence against their husband/partner. Seven provinces show that married women are more likely to initiate violence, ranging from a low in West New Britain (14.4%) to a high in Western Highlands (35.4%). Fifteen provinces show that divorced, separated, or widowed women had initiated violence against their husband/partner, ranging from a low in AROB (17.0%) to a high in Hela (87.1%).

Number of living children

At the national level, the DHS found that women with no living children are more likely to have ever initiated violence against their husband/partner (29.7%). Two regions also show this finding, where the Islands and Highlands each have the highest percentages among women with no living children (21.6% and 35.4%). The highest percentage in Momase is among women

³¹ DHS, p. 312.

³² DHS, p. 296.

³³ DHS, p. 296.

with 1-2 children (25.0%), and in Southern the highest percentage is among women with 3-4 children (24.4%). No region has the highest percentage among women with 5+ children.

Distribution at the provincial level shows ten provinces with the highest percentages among women with no living children, ranging from a low in Jiwaka (23.1%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (61.5%). For provinces with the highest percentages among women with 1-2 children, the range is from a low in West Sepik (22.9%) to a high in West New Britain (27.5%). For provinces with the highest percentages among women with 3-4 children, the range is from a low in Milne Bay (16.0%) to a high in NCD (55.6%).

Hela is the only province that has the highest percentage among women with 5+ children who report ever having instigated violence against their husband/partner (44.7%). This contrasts with the finding where Hela has the highest percentage of all provinces among women with no living children who have ever experienced physical violence (74.25%). The interpretation of these findings from Hela on the association between childbearing and intimate partner violence is difficult to draw without additional contextual evidence, but it does suggest that the number of living children is an important factor in influencing power dynamics between spouses and the likelihood that a woman will instigate violence against her husband/partner as opposed to being subjected to male partner violence.

Employment

DHS findings for the national level show an equal percentage between employed for cash and not employed among women who have ever instigated violence against their husband/partner (23.8%). Among regions, the distribution of employment shows the highest percentages in three regions among women employed for cash, ranging from a low in Southern (23.8%) to a high in the Highlands (29.6%). The highest percentage in the Islands is among women not employed for cash (20.5%).

The provinces show an even distribution between all employment categories. Eight provinces have highest percentages among women employed for cash, ranging from a low in Jiwaka (25.3%) to a high in Central (47.1%). A further eight provinces have highest percentages among women not employed for cash, ranging from a low in Southern Highlands (12.9%) to a high in Northern (52.0%). The remaining six provinces have highest percentages among women who are not employed, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (18.2%) to a high in Chimbu (53.3%).

While income and household financial decision-making undoubtedly are associated with the likelihood of intimate partner violence, the influence these factors have on women as instigators of violence against their husband/partner is not clear. The data possibly suggest that women are more likely to use violence as a means of asserting control over household income and expenditure.

Education

The DHS found that women with a secondary education (32%) are more likely to have ever initiated violence against their husband/partner than women with other levels of educational attainment. At the regional level, this variable has the most consistent pattern across background characteristics with all four regions showing the highest percentage among women with secondary education, ranging from a low in the Islands (20.5%) to a high in Momase (36.9%).

There is notable variation at the provincial level, with six provinces showing highest percentages among women with elementary education, ranging from a low in Eastern Highlands (41.9%) to a high in Hela (96.5%). NCD also shows the highest percentage for elementary education (66.7%) across all levels of education. Ten provinces show highest percentages among women with secondary education, ranging from a low in West New Britain

(14.4%) to a high in Chimbu (52.2%). Six provinces show highest percentages among women with higher education who have initiated violence against their husband/partner, ranging from a low in Manus (30.3%) to a high in Western Highlands (88.1%).

DHS Table 16.16 shows that spousal education difference does not factor significantly in whether a woman initiates violence against her husband/partner. However, the data does suggest that it is less likely for a woman to initiate violence against her husband/partner if neither have had formal education (16.0%) compared to if both having been equally educated no matter what level (23.1%).³⁴

Given the significance of education as a key indicator associated with the prevention of gender based violence of all forms,³⁵ these findings indicate the importance of focused initiatives at earlier levels of education to empower young women and men with awareness and skills to resist violence as an expected or normalized behaviour in intimate partnerships.

Wealth quintile

The DHS found that at the national level women in the highest wealth quintile (28%) are more likely to initiate violence against their husband than other women.³⁶ Findings for regions show an even distribution between the 4th and highest wealth quintile. Higher percentages for the 4th quintile are found in Highlands (3.9%) and Momase 29.6%). Higher percentages for the highest quintile are found in Southern (31.2%) and Islands (21.0%).

Among provinces, distribution is also concentrated in the highest two quintiles, but with some variation at the lowest levels. AROB shows the highest percentage among the lowest quintile (68.3%). Three provinces have the highest percentages in the 2nd quintile, being East Sepik (23.6%), West New Britain (20.7%), and New Ireland (25%). Ten provinces have highest percentages in the 4th quintile, ranging from a low in Jiwaka (28.6%) to a high in Enga (66.7%). Eight provinces have highest percentages in the highest wealth quintile among women who have ever initiated violence against their husband/partner, ranging from a low in East New Britain (22.9%) to a high in Western Highlands (42.6%).

DHS findings on the association between intimate partner violence, regardless of which partner initiates the violence, and household wealth at the higher quintiles are consistently significant across a range of variables, which suggests that in PNG violence is often the consequence of economic stresses related to the monetary economy.

DHS Findings on Sources of Help

DHS Table 16.18 shows that the most common sources of help sought by women who have experienced physical or sexual violence were their own family (72%), followed by their husband's family (13%), friends (11%), neighbours (11%), and the police (10%). Few women sought help from service providers including social work organisations or doctors/medical personnel (3% each) (DHS p. 297).

4.3.6 Specification set based on Table 16.17 *help-seeking to stop violence*

DHS Table 16.17 presents data on women's help-seeking behaviour by type of violence experienced and by background characteristics, including by regions and provinces. The findings show that 35% of women who have ever experienced physical or sexual violence have sought help, while 13% have never sought help but have told someone about the violence. Thirty-nine percent of women who have experienced any type of physical or sexual violence have not sought help or told anyone about the violence.

³⁴ DHS, p. 312.

³⁵ Kishor, Sunita and Kiersten Johnson, 2004, pp. 31-32.

³⁶ DHS, p. 296.

Women who have experienced both physical and sexual violence (43%) are more likely to seek help than women who have experienced sexual violence (18%).³⁷

The same pattern is apparent at the regional level where women who have experienced both physical and sexual violence are more likely to seek help than women who have experienced sexual violence. The percentage of women who have ever experienced physical and sexual violence and have sought help is highest in Southern (48.4%) followed by the Islands (42.7%) and the Highlands (42.6%). Momase has the lowest percentage of women who have sought help (39.2%).

Among women who have experienced sexual violence and have sought help, percentages are highest in the Highlands (27.3%) followed by Southern (20%) and Islands (20%). The percentage for Momase is considerably lower, where only 2.1% of women who have experienced sexual violence have sought help.

Among women who have ever experienced physical and sexual violence and have not sought help but told someone, the highest percentage is in the Highlands (15.4%) followed by the Islands (12.8%) and Southern (10.9%). Momase has the lowest percentage of women who have not sought help but have told someone (8.6%).

The DHS found that help-seeking to stop violence varies substantially by province, from a low among women who have experienced both physical and sexual violence in AROB (18%) to a high among women in Manus (45%).

The specification set based on Table 16.17 generated data on background characteristics by regions and provinces to enable further analysis of associations and identify any significant patterns at the subnational level. This set of data is especially relevant for service providers to assess whether help-seeking behaviour has increased in recent years from when the DHS was conducted, given that service provision has expanded considerably throughout the country with awareness on the Family Protection Act, expansion of the referral network including Family Support Centres and Family Sexual Violence Units, and improved case management being offered by service providers such as Femili PNG.³⁸

Age

The DHS found that younger women age 15-19 (24%) are less likely to seek help to stop violence than women age 20 and above (33%-39%).³⁹ This pattern is not as apparent at the regional level, where there is greater distribution across age groups among women seeking help, telling someone but not seeking help, and not telling anyone and not seeking help. Women age 45-49 are more likely to have sought help to stop violence in Southern (43.6%) and Islands (42.9%), but this reverses in the Highlands where women age 45-49 are more likely to have never sought help and never told anyone (46.6%) than women in other age groups. In both the Highlands and Momase, women age 30-34 are more likely to have sought help to stop violence (50.3% and 40.8%).

³⁷ DHS, p. 297. The distinction between physical and sexual violence is problematic and likely difficult for enumerators to explain or interpret when conducting a survey questionnaire. Sexual violence involves physical coercion and force, whereas as physical violence can be perpetrated without involving an act of sexual coercion and force. DHS Table 16.14 shows that physical injuries to women due to sexual violence are greater than those reported for physical violence alone (p. 309).

³⁸ Putt, Judy. 2021. Helping Family and Sexual Violence Survivors in Papua New Guinea: Evaluation of Femili PNG, Lae Operations 2014–2020. Canberra: Department of Pacific Affairs, Australian National University.

³⁹ DHS, p. 297.

For women who have never sought help and never told anyone, regional distribution across age groups shows that for Southern this is highest among women aged 20-24 (46.8%); for Momase, this is highest among women aged 25-29 (61.9%); and for the Islands, this is highest among women aged 35-39 (46.6%). As stated above for the Highlands, more women age 45-49 have never sought help or told anyone than women in other age groups.

The distribution among provinces is variable as well, with no clear patterns across age groups. West Sepik is the only province where more women age 15-19 report having sought help to stop violence than women of other age groups (55.0%). This may indicate the extent to which GBV awareness messages are reaching and empowering more younger women in this context. Six provinces show that women age 45-49 are more likely to have sought help to stop violence than women of other age groups, ranging from a low in Morobe (44.1%) to a high in Northern (85.5%). The remaining age groups have a fairly even distribution across provinces for help-seeking behaviour, ranging from 35.6% among women aged 35-39 in Southern Highlands to 72.7% among women aged 30-34 in NCD.

Variable distribution across provinces is also the case for women who have never sought help but have told someone about the violence they have experienced. Five provinces show that women age 15-19 are more likely to not seek help but to tell someone, ranging from 11.3% in West New Britain to 65.8% in Western Highlands. While no provinces show that women age 30-34 are more likely to not seek help but to tell someone, the distribution across other age groups is fairly even. These range from 11.0% among women aged 35-39 in Jiwaka to 67.6% among women aged 20-24 in Morobe.

The proportion of women who have never sought help and never told anyone is also variable across age groups and provinces. Again, no province shows that women age 30-34 are more likely to not seek help and not tell anyone than women in other age groups. However, six provinces show that women age 40-44 are more likely to not seek help and not tell anyone, ranging from 42.1% in Western Highlands to 80.0% in Gulf. The highest percentage of women who have not sought help and have not told anyone about the violence they have experienced is found among women aged 25-29 in Morobe (80.8%).

Given that available services for responding to GBV are more readily accessible in NCD than other provinces throughout the country, it is notable that the highest percentage of women in NCD who have not sought help and have not told anyone is among women aged 20-24. This indicates the need to better understand the barriers that younger women face in seeking help as well as the need for greater outreach to this age cohort about available services and access to justice.

Residence

The DHS found that the proportion of women seeking help to end violence is higher in urban areas (40%) than in rural areas (34%).⁴⁰ This pattern is apparent at the regional level for Southern (44.5% to 35.9%), Momase (40.3% to 30.0%), and the Islands (37.5% to 30.0%), but the Highlands shows that the proportion of women seeking help to end violence is higher in rural areas (37.9%) than in urban areas (30.3%).

Two regions show a greater proportion of urban women who never sought help but told someone; these are the Highlands (13.6% to 11.8%) and the Islands (17.5% to 14.7%). A greater proportion of rural women who never sought help but told someone are found in Southern (11.4% to 9.6%) and Momase (15.8% to 13.45). All regions show a higher proportion of rural women who never sought help and never told anyone about the violence they experienced, ranging from a low in the Highlands (37.2%) to a high in Momase (46.3%).

⁴⁰ DHS, p. 297.

Provincial variation is considerable for all help-seeking categories. Thirteen provinces show that the proportion of women seeking help to stop violence is higher in urban areas, ranging from a low in New Ireland (34.8%) to a high in Central (66.7%). The nine provinces where women in rural areas are more likely to seek help show a range from a low in AROB (18.5%) to a high in Western Highlands (44.7%).

Rural residence is more common in 13 provinces among women who never sought help but told someone about the violence they experienced, ranging from a low in Jiwaka and West Sepik (both 6.9%) to a high in East New Britain (22.0%). Sixteen provinces show that the proportion of women who neither sought help nor told anyone is higher in rural areas, ranging from a low in Western Highlands (24.7%) to a high in Morobe (50.9%).

The high proportion of women who neither sought help nor told anyone is notable for NCD (32.9%), given the relative accessibility of available services in the nation's capital.

Marital Status. The DHS found that women who have never been married are less likely (19%) to seek help than women who are married (35%) and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed (55%).⁴¹ This pattern is apparent at the regional level, where women who are married are more likely to seek help in Southern (41.4%), and divorced, separated or widowed women are more likely to seek help in the Highlands (68.8%), Momase (61.9%), and the Islands (37.2%).

A higher proportion of married women are more likely to not seek help but tell someone in the Highlands (12.5%) and Momase (17.7%), whereas the proportion is higher among never-married women in Southern (11.7%) and divorced, separated, or widowed women in the Islands (16.3%).

The proportion of married women who have neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence they experienced is higher in the Highlands (39.1%) and the Islands (43.1%), whereas the proportion is higher among divorced, separated, or widowed women in Southern (40.7%). The highest proportion of women who have never sought help nor told anyone is found among never-married women in Momase (45.3%).

Proportions at the provincial level vary considerably but reveal a similar pattern where 15 provinces show that women who are divorced, separated, or widowed are more likely to seek help to stop violence, ranging from a low in East New Britain (42.9%) to a high in Chimbu (76.5%). However, among the provinces with higher proportions of married women

Nine provinces have a higher proportion of never-married women who are more likely to not seek help but tell someone, ranging from a low in Gulf (7.1%) to a high in Western Highlands (65.8%).

Among women who have never sought help nor told anyone about the violence they have experienced, the proportions are evenly distributed across marital status. Seven provinces have higher percentages among married women, ranging from a low in Manus (33.3%) to a high in Gulf (54.5%). Seven provinces having higher percentages among divorced, separated, or widowed women, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (33.3%) to a high in Central (69.2%). Eight provinces have higher percentages among never-married women ranging from a low in Eastern Highlands (42.9%) to a high in Jiwaka (76.7%).

With no dominant pattern on marital status as a factor in help-seeking, the data suggest that women's decision-making is influenced in different ways by the dynamics of agency and empowerment across cultural contexts and social circumstances. Variations in the data also suggest that influencing factors are more complex than having access to available services, especially given the low number of women who do seek help from formal services (Text Box 7).

⁴¹ DHS, p. 297.

Number of living children

The DHS found that women with no living children (27%) are less likely than women with one or more children (34%-40%) to seek help.⁴² This pattern is reflected in the regional data, where women with 3-4 children are more likely to seek help in the Highlands (45.9%) and Momase (37.6%), and women with 5+ children are more likely to seek help in Southern region (45.2%) and the Islands (37.3%). This pattern might indicate the relative status that childbearing gives to women, which has an empowering effect, and it might indicate that women are responding to violence because of its impact on the well-being of their children within the family unit.

At the provincial level, the data is variable with no consistent pattern, making possible associations harder to surmise. The highest proportions of women who have sought help to stop violence are found in seven provinces each for women with 3-4 children and women with 5+ children. However, these are balanced by similar proportions in three provinces among women with no living children, and in six provinces among women with 1-2 children. The ranges overall are from a low among women with 3-4 children in AROB (28.6%) to a high among women with 1-2 children in Madang (66.7%). Eastern Highlands shows an even distribution of 47.5% for both women with no living children and women with 3-4 children.

The highest proportions of women who have not sought help but have told someone about the violence they have experienced is found among women with 3-4 children in 11 provinces, ranging from a low in Madang (11.9%) to a high in Southern Highlands (30.5%). Six provinces have the highest proportions in this help-seeking category among women with no living children, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (18.2%) to a high in Western Highlands (31.8%). Chimbu is the only province where women with 5+ children are more likely to not seek help but to tell someone (62.3%).

Among women who have never sought help and never told anyone, proportions are distributed evenly across provinces (five provinces highest among women with no living children; six provinces highest among women with 1-2 children; five provinces highest among women with 3-4 children); and eight provinces highest among women with 5+ children), and overall, these are higher percentages than found in the other two help-seeking categories. For the eight provinces with highest proportions among women with 5+ children, the range is from a low in Western Highlands (32.0%) to a high in AROB (68.8%). However, the highest percentage across all categories is found in Madang among women with no living children (73.7%). The distribution among provinces contrasts with national averages and suggests the importance of intersecting contextual variables that influence women's decisions to seek help.

Employment

The DHS report does not make any observations about employment as a variable for help-seeking behaviour but data from Table 16.17 shows that women employed for cash are more likely to have sought help to stop violence (45.3%) than women who are employed not for cash (36.8%) and women who are not employed (31.0%). The proportion of women who never sought help but have told someone is also highest among women employed for cash (14.5%), whereas the proportion of women who have never sought help and have never told anyone is highest among women who are employed not for cash (41.7%).

Three regions also show that women employed for cash are more likely to have sought help to stop violence. These are Southern (44.2%), Highlands (54.8%), and Momase (40.3%), whereas the Islands region has the highest proportion among women employed not for cash (36.8%). The highest proportions of women who never sought help but have told someone are found among women employed for cash in Southern (19.2%) and the Islands (19.2%), and among women who are not employed in the Highlands (13.5%) and Momase (16.4%). For women who have never sought help and never told anyone about their violence they experienced, the

⁴² DHS, p. 297.

regional distribution shows highest proportions among women employed not for cash in the Highlands (45.0%) and Momase (46.5%), and among women not employed in Southern (39.8%) and the Islands (43.7%).

The distribution of percentages at the provincial level varies somewhat but the same overall pattern is observed with 11 provinces showing that women employed for cash are more likely to seek help, ranging from a low in Morobe (33.3%) to a high in Hela (100%). Six provinces have higher proportions among women employed not for cash, ranging from a low in AROB (20.0%) to a high in Chimbu (76.9%).

Eleven provinces also have highest proportions among women employed for cash who have not sought help but have told someone, ranging from a low in Madang (14.1%) to a high in Western (50%). This is balanced by three provinces with highest proportions among women employed not for cash, and eight provinces with highest proportions among women not employed who have not sought help but have told someone.

Provincial distributions differ from the national average for women who have never sought help nor told anyone, with 11 provinces having highest proportions among women not employed, ranging from a low in Hela (30.2%) to a high in Central (53%). Western Highlands has highest proportions among women not employed for all categories of help-seeking (42.4%, 21.2% and 25.9%).

Of note are the findings from NCD, where women who are not employed are more likely to seek help (51.5%). NCD is also one of five provinces with the highest proportion of women employed for cash among those who have not sought help and have not told anyone (44.8%). This raises issues related to job security and workplace policies that ensure support for employees to access services, particularly in an urban context where formal services are more readily available and employment opportunities are greater.

Education

The DHS report does not make any observations about education as a variable for help-seeking behaviour but data from Table 16.17 shows that for PNG as a whole, women with elementary education are more likely to seek help (39.3%); women with higher education are more likely to not seek help but tell someone (44.4%); and women with no education are more likely to have never sought help nor tell anyone about the violence they have experienced (44.2%).

The distribution across regions reveals a different pattern, where Momase is the only region where women with elementary education are more likely to seek help (37.5%), whereas the three other regions show that women with higher education are more likely to seek help, with Southern at 50%; Highlands at 70.3%; and Islands at 50.0%. In contrast, Momase shows a greater proportion of women with higher education not seeking help but telling someone (94.5%), which is the highest regional percentage across all categories of help-seeking behaviour. The regional distribution of the proportion of women who do not seek help nor tell anyone is found among women with no education in Southern (47.1%) and the Highlands (42.4%), among women with elementary education in the Islands (66.7%); and among women with secondary education in Momase (58.4%).

The distribution of education levels spreads across provinces for all help-seeking categories with no clear pattern. However, no provinces show that women with no education seek help, whereas eight provinces have the highest proportion of women with no education who do not seek help or tell anyone, ranging from a low in Southern Highlands (44.9%) to a high in Northern (66.6%).

Among women with higher education, seven provinces fall into the help-seeking category, ranging from a low in East New Britain (37.5%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (89.3%); five

provinces have higher proportions of women who do not seek help but tell someone, ranging from a low in East Sepik (33.3%) to a high in Morobe (98.2%); and two provinces have greater proportions of women with higher education who neither seek help nor tell anyone, these being Manus (41.0%) and Central (88.9%).

Among women with elementary education, Milne Bay has the highest proportion of women who seek help (92.9%); Southern Highlands has the highest proportion of women who do not seek help but tell someone (83.3%); and East Sepik has the highest proportion of women who neither seek help nor tell anyone (91.4%). Provincial proportions of women with primary and secondary education are similarly distributed across all three help-seeking categories, with an overall low in Gulf among women with secondary education who do not seek help but tell someone (10.0%), to an overall high in West Sepik among women with secondary education who seek help (64.3%).

Wealth quintile

The DHS report does not make any observations about wealth quintile as a variable for help-seeking behaviour but data from Table 16.17 shows that for PNG as a whole, women in the second wealth quintile are more likely to have sought help to stop violence (36.4%); women in the highest quintile are more likely to not seek help but to tell someone (16.5%); and women in the middle quintile are more likely to have never sought help nor to have told anyone about the violence they have experienced (42.5%).

Every wealth quintile is represented in the distribution of help-seeking categories at the regional level. Proportions of women who have sought help are highest for all four regions in the fourth and highest quintiles. The fourth quintile includes Momase (41.6%) and Southern (40.8%), whereas the highest quintile includes Highlands (54.7%) and Islands (35.0%).

The regional distribution of wealth quintiles among women who have not sought help but have told someone includes the lowest quintile for the Highlands ((15.7%), the second quintile for Southern (13.8%), the middle quintile for the Islands (17.8%), and the highest quintile for Momase (28.9%). Among women who have never sought help nor told anyone, the regional distribution of wealth quintiles is the lowest for Southern (52.5%) and the Islands (58.3%), the middle quintile for Momase (50.4%), and the fourth quintile for the Highlands (51.7%).

At the provincial level, the distribution varies considerably across provinces, as do percentages within provinces, with no clear pattern that suggests a direct association between household wealth and help-seeking behaviour. Seven provinces have higher proportions in the highest wealth quintile for women who have sought help to stop violence, ranging from a low in East Sepik (40%) to a high in Southern Highlands (78.6%). Five provinces have higher proportions for the second quintile; four provinces have higher proportions for the lowest and fourth quintiles; and two provinces have higher proportions for the middle quintile for women who have sought help to stop violence.

Eight provinces show higher proportions in the highest quintile among women who have not sought help but have told someone, ranging from a low in NCD (10.2%) to a high in Enga (40.0%). The provincial distribution for the other wealth quintiles includes four provinces for the lowest quintile, two provinces for the second quintile, five provinces for the middle quintile, and three provinces for the fourth quintile.

Among women who have never sought help and never told anyone, the provincial distribution includes six provinces for the lowest quintile, four provinces each for the second and middle quintile, five provinces for the fourth quintile, and three provinces for the highest quintile. Southern Highlands has the highest proportion in the fourth quintile for women who have never sought help nor told anyone (83.3%), which is also the highest percentage across all quintiles and help-seeking categories.

This finding from the Southern Highlands, alongside the high proportion in Southern Highlands of women in the highest quintile who have sought help (78.6%), suggests that household wealth is not necessarily a stable factor in influencing women's help-seeking behavior. This is also suggested in the data from NCD which has the highest proportions among women in the highest wealth quintile who have either not sought help but have told someone (10.2%) or who have never sought help and never told anyone (33.0%). Rather, these findings suggest that other factors such as stigma, fear, concerns about confidentiality, privacy, and reputational harm might present barriers for women in higher wealth quintiles, especially if their husband/partner is a public figure.

Applying background characteristics by region and province

Specifications sets were generated to apply background characteristics (age; residence; marital status; the number of living children; education; employment; wealth quintile) by region and province to three DHS tables in Chapter 15 Domestic Violence to further examine how variables are distributed across the country and to identify any significant patterns at the sub-national level.

5.1 Specification set based on Table 16.3 Persons committing physical violence

The DHS found that among ever-married women who have experienced physical violence since age 15, 78% report their current husband as the perpetrator, and 15% report a former husband as the perpetrator. Eighteen percent report violence by fathers/stepfathers, while 12% report violence by mothers/stepmothers and 13% brothers or sisters.⁴³ The distribution across regions among married women who report their current husband as the perpetrator shows a low in Southern (72.1%) and a high in Momase (84.6%).

The specification set looks closer at this dataset by background characteristics at regional and provincial levels and reveals the vulnerability of young women aged 15-19, where percentages at the national level are consistently higher than other age groups among women who report violence by fathers/stepfathers (42.4%), violence by mothers/stepmothers (24.8%), violence by siblings (21.6%), and violence by other relatives (19.3%).

Women with no living children are also particularly vulnerable, showing consistently higher percentages than women with children where physical violence is perpetrated by fathers/stepfathers (37.1%), by mothers/stepmothers (23.4%), by siblings (18.8%), and by other relatives (14.4%).

The same pattern of vulnerability for younger women and women with no living children is apparent at the regional and provincial levels with only a few exceptions and is also apparent among women who have never married. The distribution across regions shows that the proportion of unmarried women who report physical violence by fathers/stepfathers ranges from a low in the Highlands (39.0%) to a high in the Islands (54.5%). The proportion of unmarried women who report violence by mothers/stepmothers ranges from a low in the Highlands (23.0%) to a high in Southern (40.6%). The range of violence by siblings is from a low in the Highlands (15.0%) to a high in the Islands (24.7%). The regional lows in the Highlands are

⁴³ DHS, p. 291.

offset by the highest proportion of violence perpetrated by other relatives among unmarried women (29.0%), whereas the low is in the Islands (10.4%).

Overall, violence committed by family members has greater proportions among women aged 15-19 across all regions. However, the Highlands shows a higher proportion of violence by other relatives among women aged 40-44 (26.9%), and the Islands has an equal proportion by siblings for women aged 15-19 and women aged 20-24 (24.7%), and a higher proportion by other relatives for women age 30-34 (13.8%).

The distribution across regions shows that the proportion of women with no living children who report physical violence by fathers/stepfathers ranges from a low in the Highlands (29.0%) to a high in Southern (44.4%). The proportion of women with no living children who report violence by mothers/stepmothers ranges from a low in the Highlands (13.4%) to a high in Momase (33.1%). Violence perpetrated by siblings among women with no living children ranges from a low in Momase (16.9%) to a high in the Islands (21.6%). These proportions are reversed for violence by other relatives among women with no living children, with a low in the Islands (9.8%) to a high in Momase (16.9%).

The distribution across provinces also shows a similar pattern of vulnerability among women who have never married but with more variation across categories of persons committing violence, which likely reveals how physical violence as a form of power and control within households and family units is differentially exercised depending on cultural context. For instance, West Sepik shows that the category of other relatives is 0.0% among women who have never married, whereas it has the highest proportion of all provinces for violence committed by mothers/stepmothers (68.9%). Northern also has a high proportion of never-married women who report having experienced physical violence committed by mothers/stepmothers (53.8%), which is higher than violence committed by fathers/stepfathers (38.5%).

Among women who have never-married, the ranges across provinces for all categories show that physical violence by fathers/stepfathers is lowest in Western Highlands (18.2%) and highest in West New Britain (72.7%). Violence by mothers/stepmothers ranges from a low in Enga (1.3%) to a high in West Sepik (68.9%). Violence perpetrated by siblings among unmarried women ranges from a low in Madang (0.0%) to a high in New Ireland (64.6%). Physical violence committed by other relatives among unmarried women is nil in West Sepik (0.0%) and highest in Hela (60.0%).

Among women aged 15-19, the lowest proportion of physical violence by fathers/stepfathers is 30.0% in both Northern and AROB. Similar to that found among women who have never-married, the proportion of violence by mothers/stepmothers among women aged 15-19 ranges from a low in Enga (4.7%) to a high in West Sepik (58.7%). Three provinces (Gulf, Jiwaka, and Madang) report no violence perpetrated by siblings among women aged 15-19, whereas East Sepik has a considerably high proportion (56.1%). However, Gulf, Jiwaka, and Madang have comparatively high percentages among women in older age groups. For example, violence by siblings increases to 45.1% in Gulf and 50.0% in Jiwaka among women aged 20-24. Physical violence committed by other relatives among women aged 15-19 ranges from a low in Western (0.0%) to a high in Milne Bay (30.9%).

Among women with no living children, the lowest proportion of physical violence by fathers/stepfathers is found in Chimbu (15.4%) and the highest in NCD (63.6%). The proportion of violence by mothers/stepmothers among women with no living children ranges from a low in Gulf (7.7%) to a high in West Sepik (67.0%). Violence perpetrated by siblings among women with no living children ranges from a low in Madang (0.0%) to a high in New Ireland (50.0%). However, higher proportions of violence by siblings are found in several provinces among women with one or more children. Physical violence committed by other relatives among women with no living children is highest in Morobe (26.2%). Both Jiwaka and West Sepik show 0.0% for this category among women with no living children but this increases among women with one or more children.

While provinces in the Highlands generally have lower proportions of physical violence committed by fathers/stepfathers and mothers/stepmothers, this pattern changes for violence by parents-in-law, especially among women aged 25-29 with 3-4 children. This pattern is not seen in provinces from other regions where the rates are predominantly zero. Chimbu shows the highest proportions of violence committed by fathers-in-law among women aged 25-29 (26.3%) and women with 1-2 children (17.2%). Enga shows the highest proportions of violence committed by mothers-in-law among women aged 25-29 (23.1%) and among women with 3-4 children (17.2%). These findings likely reflect customary practices related to marital residence and patrilineal kinship in these two provinces.

The discernable pattern of vulnerability among younger women, including unmarried women and women with no children, concerning persons who commit physical violence seems to suggest the significance of marriage and childbearing in offering women some measure of status and protection against violence. However, understanding this association requires further consideration of the influence of other intersecting variables on the perpetration of physical violence, particularly within family units. Likewise, the variation at the provincial level across categories of persons committing violence suggests that physical violence as a form of power and control within households and family units is highly contextualized.

5.2 Specification set based on Table 16.6 *Persons committing sexual violence*

The DHS found that among ever-married women who have experienced sexual violence, 77% report their current husband as the perpetrator, while 19% report a former husband as the perpetrator. Among women who have never been married, current or former boyfriends (66%), relatives (16%), and strangers (6%) are the most common perpetrators of sexual violence.⁴⁴

The specification set shows how the data is distributed across regions and provinces by background characteristics. However, no discernable patterns emerge based on these variables (age; residence; marital status; the number of living children; education; employment; wealth quintile). Because the sample sizes at the provincial level are too small to generate reliable data by background characteristics, percentages are provided for the regional level only. Table 5.2.1 shows the breakdown of data by region and perpetrators of sexual violence.

For cross-reference on these findings, see also Section 4.3.3 Specification set based on Table 16.4 Experience of sexual violence.

Table 5.2.1 Persons committing sexual violence by region (%)

Region	Current husband/partner	Former husband/partner	Current/former boyfriend	Father	Brother	Other relative	Own friend	Family friend	Stranger	Number of women who have experienced sexual violence
Southern	63.4	16.7	9.8	0.4	0.4	10.2	4.5	2.0	2.4	246
Highlands	71.1	18.4	10.2	0.7	1.1	3.5	1.4	0.4	5.1	571
Momase	76.1	15.5	11.0	0.3	0.0	7.5	0.5	0.5	2.4	373
Islands	63.6	17.9	16.8	0.0	0.5	6.5	0.2	1.1	4.9	184

Note: Women can report more than one person who committed the violence.

⁴⁴ DHS, p. 292.

Empowerment measures

Women's empowerment measures (Table 15.13) were applied to two DHS tables by region and province to further examine associations between variables.

The 2016-18 PNG DHS included a strong focus on women's empowerment indicators in terms of employment, earnings, control over earnings, the magnitude of earnings relative to those of their partners, asset ownership, gender-related attitudes, household decision-making, and attitudes towards wife-beating (Text Box 8).

The DHS looked specifically at women's participation in household decision-making and women's attitudes toward wife beating as key empowerment measures. The index on decision-making measured whether women make decisions alone or jointly with their husbands in all three of the following areas: (1) their own health care, (2) major household purchases, and (3) visits to their family or relatives.⁴⁵ The index on attitudes toward wife beating measured whether respondents agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under each of the following five circumstances: she burns the food, she argues with him, she goes out without telling him, she neglects the children, and she refuses to have sex with him.⁴⁶ While these indices are generally associated, the findings from the DHS show no clear relationship between them (Table 15.13).⁴⁷ The interpretation of this data points to the need to understand how other contextual factors combine to influence attitudes and marital power relations where male partner violence is viewed by both women and men as an acceptable practice.

The DHS did find a positive association between the combined indices on decision-making and acceptance of wife beating with measures of women's ability and desire to control their fertility. For example, the more decisions women participate in, the more likely they are to use a contraceptive method (39% of women involved in all three specified decisions compared with 31% not involved in any of the decisions (Table 15.14).⁴⁸

6.1 Specification set based on Table 7.13 *Decision-making about family planning*

⁴⁵ DHS, p. 263.

⁴⁶ DHS, p. 264.

⁴⁷ DHS, p. 265.

⁴⁸ DHS, p. 265.

Women's Empowerment Indicators Chapter 15, DHS 2016-18

Employment and control over earnings: 64% of currently married men were employed in the past 12 months, as compared with only 36% of currently married women. 46% of currently married women with cash earnings decide independently on how their earnings are used. About half of women and men report that they make joint decisions regarding husbands' cash earnings.

Participation in decision making: More than 8 in 10 currently married women participate, either by themselves or jointly with their husband, in decisions regarding their own health care, while 70% decide alone or jointly on making major household purchases and 79% decide alone or jointly on visiting their family or relatives. 62% participate in all three decisions, while 10% do not participate in any of the decisions.

Attitudes towards wife beating: 70% of women and 72% of men believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife in at least one of five specified situations.

Empowerment and health outcomes: Use of a contraceptive method is higher among women who participate in one or more household decisions. In most cases, women's participation in decision making is positively associated with reproductive health seeking behaviour related to antenatal care, delivery from a skilled provider, and postnatal checks (DHS p. 259).

A specification set was generated to look more specifically at the regional and provincial distribution of the association between the combined indices on decision-making and acceptance of wife-beating with measures of women's ability and desire to control their fertility. While this association is partly examined in Table 15.14, which looks at the current use of contraception by methods and women's empowerment,⁴⁹ the variables do not include those focused on decision-making regarding contraceptive use.

DHS Table 7.13 looks specifically at decision-making about family planning. It shows that 60% of currently married women aged 15-49 who are using a family planning method report that the decision to use the method was made jointly with their husband, whereas 23% say they made their own decision, and 13% say their husband mainly made the decision.⁵⁰ Data suggest that joint decision-making is the norm regardless of background characteristics.

The DHS findings note that decisions not to use family planning are much less likely to be made jointly than decisions to use family planning. Among currently married women aged 15-49 who are not using a family planning method, only 36% say they made the decision not to use family planning jointly with their husband, 32% say they decided themselves, and 12% say their husband made the decision.⁵¹

At the provincial level, the percentage of currently married women who report that the decision to use family planning was made jointly with their husband is highest in East Sepik (80%), the percentage who say that their husband mainly made the decision is highest in West Sepik (26%), and the percentage who say that they made their own decision is highest in Manus (36%).⁵²

Looking at this data concerning two of the empowerment indicators (participation in decision-making and attitudes to wife beating) provides a more nuanced picture of decision-making regarding fertility control, with somewhat different findings. The specification set shows that at the national level for currently married women who made their own decision to use family planning, the highest proportion is found among women involved in 1-2 household decisions (31.0%), and among women who believe that wife beating is justified in 3-4 specified situations (25.8%).

For women who report that the decision to use contraception was made jointly with their husband, the highest proportion is found among women who participate in all three decisions (65.0%) and who believe that wife beating is justified in 1-2 specified situations (63.3%). Among women who report that the decision to use contraception is mainly made by their husbands, the majority also report that they are not involved in any household decisions (23.7%) and that husbands are justified in using violence in all five situations (14.9%).

The regional distribution of these variables replicates the strong association between joint decision-making between wife and husband on the use of contraception and women's participation in household decisions, as per the empowerment measure. This pattern is found in Southern (66.0%), Momase (70.9%), and Islands (66.7%). By contrast, in the Highlands, for women who report that family planning decisions are made jointly with their husbands the highest proportion is among women who are not involved in other decisions (57.3%). This contrasts most directly with the proportion of women in the Highlands who make family planning decisions on their own and participate in all three household decisions (25.1%).

For the other three regions among women who report making family planning decisions on their own, higher proportions are found for those who participate in 1-2 household decisions in both Southern (27.8%) and Momase (31.6%), whereas the Islands shows higher proportions among women who have no participation in decision-making (35.1%).

⁴⁹ DHS, p. 286.

⁵⁰ DHS, p. 108.

⁵¹ DHS, p. 108.

⁵² DHS, p. 108.

Where women report that family planning decisions are made mainly by their husbands, findings across all four regions show the highest proportion among women who report not being involved in any household decision-making (Southern at 37.6%; Highlands at 16.8%; Momase at 19.5%; Islands at 30.9%).

Family planning decisions made jointly between wife and husband also show a stronger association with justification for spousal violence, with three regions showing the highest proportions for 1-2 specified situations (Southern at 66.2%; Momase at 71.4%; Islands at 64.3%). The Highlands is the only region where wife beating is seen to be justified for all five specified situations among women who report joint decision-making on family planning (65.8%).

This pattern is also observed among women who report that family planning decisions are made mainly by the husband, with higher proportions in three regions showing that wife beating is regarded as justified in all five specified situations (Southern at 14.6%; Momase at 18.8%; Islands at 15.5%). Again, the Highlands presents a contrast to the other regions for women who report that family planning decisions are made mainly by their husbands, which has a higher proportion among women who state that wife beating is justified in only 1-2 situations (13.7%). Interpretation of this apparent reversal might suggest that when husbands are the main decision-makers about family planning, women regard their husband's active role as the basis for limiting the justification for spousal violence.

Among women who report making family planning decisions on their own, regional proportions are still notably high for justification of spousal violence. Momase shows the highest proportion for justification in 3-4 specified situations (28.6%) whereas justification in all five situations is found in Southern (31.2%) and the Islands (28.6%). The Highlands region is the exception again, where among women who report making family planning decisions on their own, the highest proportion also states that spousal violence is not justified in any circumstance (33.0%). As a measure of empowerment, this is the strongest finding where these two variables are considered together.

While the regional patterns are apparent at the provincial level, considerable variability between provinces in the same region is also noticeable. For women who report making family planning decisions on their own, five provinces show higher proportions among women who are not involved in decision-making as per the empowerment measure, ranging from a low in Northern (23.8%) to a high in West New Britain (51.1%); whereas 13 provinces show higher proportions among women involved in 1-2 decisions, ranging from a low in Western (14.9%) to a high in West Sepik (47.8%). The strong association between joint decision-making on contraception use and women involved in all three household decisions is found in 15 provinces, ranging from a low in Enga (45.3%) to a high in AROB (81.7%). For women who report that their husband is the main decision-maker regarding contraception use, 13 provinces have higher proportions among women who are not involved in decision-making, ranging from a low in Southern Highlands (13.7%) to a high in Hela (98.3%), which is also the highest proportion for all categories.

For the empowerment measure on attitudes to wife beating, proportions are evenly distributed across all categories of decision-making on contraceptive use. For women who make decisions about family planning on their own, six provinces have higher proportions among women who do not justify wife beating under any circumstance, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (31.8%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (51.4%). Both Manus (48.5%) and Hela (53.1%) have higher proportions among women who justify violence in 1-2 circumstances. Nine provinces have higher proportions among women who justify wife beating in 3-4 specific situations, ranging from a low in AROB (15.4%) to a high in West Sepik (41.9%); and five provinces have higher proportions of women who justify violence in all five situations, ranging from a low in Chimbu (28.4%) to a high in NCD (40.2%).

For joint decisions on contraceptive use, six provinces show higher proportions among women who do not justify spousal violence under any circumstance, ranging from a low in NCD (69.9%)

to a high in Western (83.5%). The reversal for NCD between this finding and the finding among women who make family planning decisions on their own is noticeable and suggests the importance of joint decision-making on fertility decisions for women's empowerment and the prevention of spousal violence.

Seven provinces show higher proportions between joint decisions and the justification of spousal violence in 1-2 specific situations, ranging from a low in Enga (49.9%) to a high in Southern Highlands (85.9%). Four provinces have high proportions of women who justify violence in 3-4 specific situations, ranging from a low in Manus (62.5%) to a high in Gulf (76.8%); and five provinces have higher proportions of women who justify violence in all five situations, ranging from a low in Jiwaka (53.3%) to a high in East Sepik (81.6%). The association between joint decision-making on contraception and women's acceptance of wife-beating requires qualitative analysis to understand the power dynamics between spouses when it comes to making decisions jointly and how this influences attitudes to spousal violence.

For women who report that their husband is the main decision maker on the use of contraception, five provinces have higher proportions of women who do not justify spousal violence, ranging from a low in Western Highlands (12.3%) to a high in Morobe (19.6%). Four provinces have higher proportions among women who justify wife beating in 1-2 specific situations, ranging from a low in Chimbu (11.2%) to a high in Eastern Highlands (20.7%). Seven provinces have higher proportions among women who justify spousal violence in 3-4 situations, ranging from a low in New Ireland (13.9%) to a high in Gulf (29.8%); and six provinces have higher proportions of women who justify violence in all five situations, ranging from a low in AROB (10.9%) to a high in West Sepik (45.8%). Again, it is hard to interpret the association between these variables without qualitative data on power dynamics between spouses and how these influence attitudes toward violence.

The DHS found no significant patterns in the distribution of background characteristics in Table 7.13 on decision-making about family planning. Applying background characteristics at the regional and provincial levels also did not reveal any discernable patterns, although age does produce some interesting comparisons. While the specification set did not apply age as a variable against the empowerment indicators, it did allow a closer examination of age in association with decision-making on contraceptive use.

At the regional level, joint decision-making for women aged 15-19 is notably high in Southern (74.7%) and the Islands (65.4%), which might indicate a generational shift in power dynamics between spouses. The Highlands region shows a higher proportion among women aged 15-19 who report making contraception decisions on their own (52.5%), whereas Momase has the lowest proportion of all regions for this age group (3.5%).

The age distribution at the provincial level for all three decision-making categories shows higher proportions for a total of five provinces from both Southern and Highlands regions among currently women aged 15-19 who report making family planning decisions on their own, ranging from a low in Chimbu (40.0%) to a high in Southern Highlands (85.9%). However, the highest proportions of age as a variable in family planning decision-making are found in seven provinces from all four regions among women aged 25-29 who report that their husband is the main decision maker about contraceptive use, ranging from a low in AROB (10.2%) to a high in Hela (38.0%).

Among four provinces where joint decision-making is highest among women aged 15-19, Milne Bay shows a value of 100%. Hela is the only province where joint decision-making is highest among women aged 20-24, showing a value of 95%. Five provinces from three regions show the highest proportions for joint decision-making among women aged 45-49, including Southern Highlands (86.7%), which is a sharp contrast to the high value reported among women aged 15-19 in the Southern Highlands who make decisions on their own. These age comparisons for joint decision-making on contraceptive use suggest that decisions are differentially influenced depending on whether a couple is planning their family at the beginning of a marriage or whether they have reached their ideal family size.

6.2 Specification set based on Table 16.11 *Spousal violence by husband's characteristics and empowerment indicators*

The DHS used the combined empowerment indices on decision-making and acceptance of wife-beating to examine more closely the data on ever-married women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner by husband's background characteristics. The DHS findings presented in Table 16.11 shows that women's experience of spousal violence is more common among women whose husbands have higher levels of education (68%) and among women who are better educated than their husbands (67%).⁵³ This finding is at variance with the findings in Table 15.12 that show, in general, women's ability to negotiate sexual relations increases with increasing education and household wealth. Table 16.8 also found that women with elementary or no education and those in the lowest wealth quintile are less likely to experience controlling behaviours than other women (see Section 4.3.4 in this report).

Given that marital control and spousal violence are associated with sexual relations, including sexual jealousy and suspicion, analysis aimed to further examine these seemingly contradictory findings. The specification set modified Table 16.11 to look closer at controlling behaviours by the husband/partner and women's ability to negotiate sexual relations, by spousal education and age difference, and by region and province. The specification set incorporated variables from Table 15.12 which assessed the ability of women to negotiate safer sexual relations with their husbands by asking whether they could say no to their husbands if they do not want to have sexual intercourse and whether they could ask their husbands to use a condom.

Findings from Table 15.12 in the DHS show that 69% of women say that they can deny sex, and 54% say that they can ask their husband to use a condom.⁵⁴ The DHS found that the proportions of women reporting that they can deny sex and ask their husbands to use a condom are lower in the Highlands region (65% and 46%, respectively) than in the other regions.

The modified table produced similar findings to that of Table 16.11 regarding spousal education and age difference at the national level but significantly different results from Table 15.12 on women's ability to negotiate sexual relations. Interpretation of this data requires caution due to smaller sample sizes at the provincial level and the relatively high percentage of missing data due to suppression (See Annex 1 Technical Notes). Nonetheless, several informative observations can be made from tabulating the data in this way.

At the national level, the association between the husband's education level and controlling behaviours shows the highest proportion of men who display one or more specific behaviours among men with more than secondary education (60.3%). This pattern is also found at the regional level in Southern (60.1%) and Momase (83.0%), whereas the Highlands shows a higher proportion among men with secondary education (63.7%) and the Islands among men with primary education (58.2%). When spousal education difference is factored in, the highest proportion of men who display one or more specific behaviours is found among women who are better educated than their husbands (59.8%). Three regions also show this pattern, being Southern (61.1%), Highlands (61.8%), and the Islands (65.5%), with Momase showing the highest proportion where the husband is better educated (64.2%).

The association between spousal age difference and husband's controlling behaviours at the national level is most evident among women who are ten or more years younger than their husbands (59.8%). This pattern is also found in Southern (55.6%) and Momase (77.8%), whereas the Highlands show a higher proportion among women who are 5-9 years younger

⁵³ DHS, p. 295.

⁵⁴ DHS, p. 264.

than their husband (62.3%) and the Islands has a higher proportion among women who are older than their husband (62.3%).

At the national level, women's ability to say no to their husband if they do not want to have sexual intercourse shows a higher proportion among women whose husband has no formal education (27.1%) and where both husband and wife have no formal education (27.2%). Three regions also show this pattern for husbands' education, being Southern (29.8%), Highlands (27.9%), and Momase (22.8%), with the Islands showing the highest proportion among women whose husband has more than secondary education (25.7%). Spousal education difference at the regional level shows the highest proportion of women who can say no to sexual intercourse is found where neither husband nor wife has formal education (27.2%). This pattern is also found in Southern (38.8%), Momase (28.9%), and the Islands (23.6%), whereas the Highlands shows a higher proportion where the wife is better educated (25.7%).

The association at the national level between spousal age difference and the ability of women who can say no to sex is most evident among women who are ten or more years younger than their husbands (22.9%). This finding is in direct contrast to the association between the husband's controlling behaviours and the spousal age difference noted above. Three regions have higher proportions among women who are ten or more years younger than their husbands, being Southern (27.9%), Highlands (28.5%), and the Islands (18.7%), whereas Momase shows a higher proportion among women who are the same age as their husband (22.8%).

The percentage of women who can ask their husband to use a condom is highest at the national level among women whose husband has more than secondary education (71.9%) and where the wife is better educated (67.5%) and older than her husband (62.5%). The regional distribution shows some variation in this pattern. The highest proportions in Southern of women who can ask their husband to use a condom are also found among women whose husband has more than secondary education (78.4%) and women who are better educated than their husband (68.0%), but for spousal age difference the highest proportion is among women who are 1-4 years younger than their husband (69.0%). The Highlands also has a higher proportion among women whose husband has more than secondary education (74.7%), but higher proportions for where both husband and wife are equally educated (66.2%) and where the wife is older than the husband (54.9%). The distribution in Momase shows higher proportions where the husband has secondary education (59.0%), the wife is better educated (76.8%), and where the wife is ten or more years younger than their husband (65.0%).

Tabulating the variables in this way produces wide variation at the provincial level with no clear patterns. For comparison between provinces, mapping the distribution of the highest total values at the provincial level for each empowerment indicator by combined education and age indicators shows the following ranges. The highest total percentage per province for one or more controlling behaviours ranges from a low in Central (62.2%) to a high in Morobe (77.5%). The highest total percentage per province for no reported controlling behaviours displayed ranges from a low in West New Britain (52.2%) to a high in East Sepik (62.8%). The highest total percentage per province among women who can say no to their husband if they do not want to have sexual intercourse ranges from a low in AROB (14.9%) to a high in Western Highlands (33.3%), which is significantly lower than the national proportion reported in Table 15.12 (69%). Among women who can ask their husbands to use a condom, the highest total percentage per province ranges from a low in Morobe (50.7%) to a high in Milne Bay (56.5%). The comparative proportions in the last finding indicate that more than half of all respondents say that they can negotiate condom use in marriage, which is similar to the national proportion reported in Table 15.12 (54%).

The variations at the provincial level suggest that interpretation of these associations requires qualitative evidence from a life stage perspective to contextualize the findings and gain insights on how education and age influence marital power dynamics related to husbands' controlling behaviours and the ability of married women to negotiate sexual relations. Qualitative evidence would also help to examine more closely the social and economic factors that contribute to

higher levels of controlling behaviours and spousal violence found among couples with higher educational levels.

Associations between specific indicators

The following three specification tables were generated to identify associations between specific indicators on GBV and SRHR.

7.1 Specification set on polygamy (Tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.2) by experience of physical violence, experience of sexual violence, and marital control exercised by husbands

Table 4.2.1 of the DHS looks at the extent of polygamy in PNG as reported by women who have co-wives, and Table 4.2.2 looks at the number of men's wives according to male respondents. The findings show that almost one in five currently married women (18%) report that their husband has another wife/wives.⁵⁵ The DHS reports that while there has been no change in the proportion of married women in polygynous marriages between 2006 (18%) and 2016-18 (18%), the proportion of married men who are in polygynous marriages has increased from 4% to 8% in the same period. This pattern suggests that traditional norms regulating the practice of polygyny are changing.

DHS findings also show that older women are more likely than younger women to have co-wives, with the percentage of married women with co-wives ranging from 13% among those age 15-19 to 21% among those age 40-44. Polygyny appears to be most common in Hela for both women and men. The proportion of married women with co-wives decreases somewhat with increasing education, from 21% of women with no education to 14% of those with higher than a secondary education, whereas among men, the proportion in polygynous marriages is highest among those with higher than a secondary education.⁵⁶

The specification set was tabulated from Table 4.2.1 to examine the association between polygyny, physical and sexual violence, and marital control by husbands, by looking at the percent distribution of currently married women aged 15-49 by the number of co-wives, and percentage of currently married women with one or more co-wives, according to the type of violence experienced, background characteristics, and the variable that measured the degree to which women say they are afraid of their husband.

At the national level, findings show that among women with one or more co-wives, 18.2% experience physical violence only, 17.9% experience sexual violence only, and 18% experience both physical and sexual violence. With this tabulation, the values of background characteristics are slightly different from Table 4.2.1 due to applying the Domestic Violence weighting (see Annex 1 Technical Notes). Results show that the highest proportions of women with one or more co-wives are aged 25-29 (22.2%); reside in urban areas (20.4%); have 1-2 children (19.6%); are not employed (17.9%); have no formal education (21.4%); and report being afraid of their husband most of the time (26.3%). The distribution across wealth quintiles shows that 18.3% are in the lowest quintile and 18.2% are in the highest.

At the regional level, the Highlands has the largest percentage of currently married women with one or more co-wives (21.6%), followed by Momase (14.9%), the Islands (13.5%), and Southern (11.8%). The Highlands also shows the highest proportions of women with one or more co-wives who report having experienced physical violence only (21.8%), sexual violence only

⁵⁵ DHS, p. 65.

⁵⁶ DHS, p. 66.

(28.5%), and both forms of violence (21.2%), and the highest proportion of women who say they are afraid of their husband most of the time (30.7%). By comparison, Southern has the lowest proportions of women with one or more co-wives who report having experienced physical violence only (11.8%), both physical and sexual violence (10.4%), and who are afraid of the husband most of the time (16.2%), whereas the Islands has the lowest proportion of women who report having experienced sexual violence only (4.5%). All regions also show a consistent pattern where women who have one or more co-wives report that they are afraid of their husband most of the time.

Background characteristics across the regions are variable except for residence where the findings consistently show higher proportions of women with one or more co-wives residing in urban areas, ranging from a low in Southern (17.5%) to a high in the Islands (26.2%). This pattern suggests that urban residence may have a significant influence on changing practices of polygyny. Because the combined value is higher than the national average for residence presented in Table 4.2.1, findings from the specification set might also suggest that the association between spousal violence and polygyny is increasingly associated with urban residence and changing economic and employment patterns.

In all provinces, women report having one or more wives, with proportions ranging from lows in Madang (5.5%), Central (6.8%), and Northern (7.5%), to highs in Morobe (24.2%), Southern Highlands (27.2%), and Hela (32.0%). Again, these values differ slightly from Table 4.2.1 because of the Domestic Violence weighting used in the specification set.

Provincial findings on spousal violence among women who have one or more co-wives show that the experience of physical violence only is highest per region in Central (15.6%), Southern Highlands (40.3%), Morobe (31.6%), and New Ireland (16.1%). While half of all provinces show no sexual violence only among women with one or more co-wives, the highest provincial proportions per region are found in Western (42.0%), Southern Highlands (60.6%), East Sepik (24.0%), and New Ireland (10.1%). Among the 11 provinces that do show sexual violence only, the proportions are higher in five provinces among women who have 2+ co-wives, indicating that this association represents an increased risk. These provinces include Milne Bay (14.5%), Southern Highlands (60.6%), Eastern Highlands (8.0%), Jiwaka (7.1%), and East Sepik (24.0%).

All provinces show the experience of both physical and sexual violence among women with one or more co-wives. The lowest provincial proportions per region are found in Northern (4.6%), Chimbu (4.8%), Madang (2.5%), and AROB (10.1%). The highest provincial proportions per region are found in Gulf (39.2%), Hela (31.4%), Morobe (41.9%), and New Ireland (25.0%).

The most consistent finding across all regions and provinces is that most women with one or more co-wives say they are afraid of their husband most of the time. The distribution of this pattern at the regional level ranges from a low in Southern (16.2%) to a high in the Highlands (30.7%). At the provincial level, this pattern is found in 15 provinces, ranging from a low in Milne Bay (14.2%) to a high in Hela (62.5%). Five provinces show greater proportions of women with one or more co-wives who are afraid of their husband sometimes, ranging from a low in Northern (4.6%) to a high in Chimbu (29.0%). Only two provinces show higher proportions of women with one or more co-wives who say they are never afraid of their husband; these are Central (8.3%) and AROB (12.1%).

Although data on background characteristics at the provincial level show considerable variation, some interesting patterns emerge which might also point to ways that polygynous practices are changing and contributing to increased vulnerabilities for spousal violence. Consistent with findings at the regional level, all provinces except for four show higher proportions of urban residence among women who have one or more co-wives. The distribution of this pattern ranges from a low in West Sepik (25.7%) to a high in Hela (50.8%), again demonstrating the significance of urban residence for changing patterns of polygyny, where it is likely to be increasingly associated with the monetary economy rather than customary marital practices supported by rural livelihoods. By contrast, the four provinces with higher proportions in rural areas are Central (6.8%), Northern (7.8%), Chimbu (20.3%), and

Eastern Highlands (18.2%). It should be noted that the two Highlands provinces have strong traditional practices of polygyny.

When weighted for domestic violence, the tabulated association between women's age and polygyny also reveals what could be regarded as an emerging pattern where younger women are increasingly becoming co-wives. This is a significant contrast to the findings in Table 4.2.1, which show that older women are more likely than younger women to have co-wives. The distribution of age for women who have one or more co-wives covers all age groups, with six provinces having higher proportions among women aged 45-49, two provinces for age 40-44, three provinces for age 35-39, two provinces for age 30-34, three provinces for age 25-29, two provinces for age 20-24, and four provinces having higher proportions among women aged 15-19. The cluster of provinces where the highest proportions of women with co-wives are age 15-19 includes Jiwaka (53.8%), Madang (29.7%), Manus (36.6%), and New Ireland, where 40% of the total of 67.7% are women with 2+ co-wives.

While Madang has the lowest total percentage of women with co-wives among all provinces (5.5%), the age pattern along with other background characteristics including highest proportion among women employed for cash (13.5%) and women in the fourth wealth quintile (14.6%), suggests that polygyny might be emerging in new forms especially in urban settings. In this sense, polygyny cannot be viewed strictly as a traditional custom but as a marital practice that is taking hold in new settings in response to changing social and economic circumstances, with increased risks for physical and sexual violence in marital relations.

7.2 Specification table on age at first sexual intercourse among young people (Table 13.14) by age at first experience of sexual violence (Table 16.5)

Findings from DHS Table 13.14 show that 5% of young women and 4% of young men have had sexual intercourse before age 15, while 32% each of young women and men had sex before age 18. Young women in rural areas are more likely to have had sexual intercourse by age 18 (33%) than their urban counterparts (26%). Conversely, young urban men are more likely than young rural men to have had sex by age 18 (37% versus 31%). The DHS notes that there is a general decline with increasing education in the percentage of young women who had sexual intercourse before age 15 (from 11% among those with no education to 1% among those with higher education) and before age 18 (from 46% among those with no education to 4% among those with higher education).⁵⁷

The specification set was tabulated from Table 13.14 and Table 16.5 to examine the association between age at first sexual intercourse for young women and their experience of physical and sexual violence by looking at the percent distribution across regions and provinces by residence and education. The smaller sample sizes at the regional and provincial levels and the effects of Domestic Violence weighting on this subset of data make an analysis of this association difficult below the national level. Nonetheless, national findings are significant and point to the importance of this association.

At the national level, tabulation shows that 61.9% of respondents who had first sexual intercourse by the age of 15 (n=71 of the total number of 1,462) had also experienced sexual violence by the same age. Young women in rural areas are more likely to have experienced first sexual intercourse and sexual violence by age 15 (5.7%) than their urban peers (2.0%) and to have no formal education (12.4%).

The national-level tabulation also shows that among women who report that their first sexual intercourse was by the age of 18 (n=68 of the total number of 980), 88.2% had experienced

⁵⁷ DHS, p. 232.

sexual violence by the same age. Young women in rural areas are more likely to have experienced first sexual intercourse and sexual violence by age 18 (37.0%) than their urban peers (28.9%), and to have no formal education (51.2%) or have primary education (48.9%).

These findings show a significant association between first sexual intercourse and the experience of sexual violence for young women. While the numbers of respondents are low at the regional and provincial levels, the percentages of young women who do experience violence in relation to first sexual activity are significantly high, which indicates the seriousness of this association for these women. The commencement of sexual activity by coercion, force, and violence has serious lifetime implications for young women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and is an issue that requires urgent prioritization in the prevention and response to GBV in Papua New Guinea.

7.3 Specification table on teenage pregnancy and motherhood (Table 5.11) by the experience of physical violence and experience of sexual violence

DHS Table 5.11 shows the percentage of women aged 15-19 who had given birth or were pregnant with their first child at the time of the survey, according to residence, education, and wealth quintile. The DHS found that 12% of women aged 15-19 have begun childbearing (10% have had a live birth and 3% are pregnant with their first child). Trends show that the percentage of teenagers who have given birth or are pregnant with their first child has remained more or less the same over the past decade (13% in 2006 and 12% in 2016-18). The proportion of teenagers who have begun childbearing rises rapidly with age, from 3% at age 15 to 27% at age 19. Rural teenagers are more likely to have started childbearing than urban teenagers (13% versus 10%). Teenagers with secondary education and those in the highest wealth quintile are less likely to have started childbearing than those with less education and those in the lower quintiles.⁵⁸

The specification set was tabulated from Table 5.11 and Table 16.5 to examine the association between pregnancy and childbirth among young women aged 15-19 and their experience of physical and sexual violence by looking at the percent distribution across regions and provinces by all background characteristics. Similar to the specification set based on Table 13.14 above, the smaller sample sizes at the regional and provincial levels and the effects of Domestic Violence weighting on this subset of data make an analysis of this association difficult below the national level. However, national findings are significant and point to the importance of this association.

At the national level, tabulation shows that among women aged 15-19 who have given birth, 11.5% have experienced physical violence only. The proportion of young women who have given birth and who have experienced sexual violence is 9.9%, and the proportion who have experienced both physical and sexual violence is 16.3%.

At the regional level among women aged 15-19 who have given birth and experienced both physical and sexual violence, proportions are distributed as follows: Southern (19.6%), Highlands (23.8%), Momase (6.9%), and Islands (5.0%).

When exact age is factored in, tabulation at the national level shows that among women who had given birth between the ages of 15-17, 3.4% had experienced violence, but this increases significantly for women age 19, where 35.1% report having experienced violence. In Southern Region, the proportions increase from 10.0% among women aged 15-17 to 29.5% among women aged 19 who had both given birth and experienced violence. For the Highlands,

⁵⁸ DHS, p. 83.

proportions increase from 2.2% to 40.2%. Momase shows an increase from 0.5% to 30.4% and the Islands show an increase from 0.9% to 38.5%.

Modification of Table 5.11 by the experience of violence also shows that most young women aged 15-19 who have given birth are residing in urban areas (12.6%) compared to rural areas (10.9%). At the regional level, this finding is consistent for Southern (20.5% versus 13.7%), Highlands (16.0% versus 14.0%), and Momase (7.3% versus 4.9%), whereas the Islands shows a higher proportion of women in rural areas (8.6% versus 7.3%).

Of note regarding the marital status of women aged 15-19 who have given birth and have experienced violence is the proportion who report being divorced, separated, or widowed. At the national level, the proportion is 70.4%. The distribution of this pattern at the regional level shows the proportion in Southern, Momase, and the Islands at 100% each, with the Highlands at 55.4%. While the interpretation of this finding is limited without contextual evidence as to whether women are able to leave abusive relationships safely and with support, it does suggest that the experience of unstable marital relations is relatively common for women aged 15-19 who have given birth and experienced intimate partner violence.

At the national level, the proportion of young women aged 15-19 who have given birth and have experienced violence is higher among those who are employed for cash (29.4%). This pattern is found in Southern (23.7%), Highlands (66.7%), and the Islands (32.5%), whereas the highest proportion in Momase is found among women employed not for cash (20.7%).

In terms of education at the national level, more young women aged 15-19 who have given birth and have experienced violence report having no formal education (24.6%). The distribution at the regional level confirms this pattern for Southern (46.7%), Highlands (23.9%), and the Islands (22.5%), whereas the highest proportion in Momase is found among women with elementary education (9.2%).

Wealth quintile shows the highest proportion at the national level in the middle quintile (12.8%) among women aged 15-19 who have given birth and have experienced violence. The distribution at the regional level shows more variation, with the highest proportion in the second quintile for Momase (12.4%) and the Islands (15.8%), the highest proportion in the middle quintile for the Highlands (37.1%), and the highest proportion in the fourth quintile for Southern (30.8%).

Comparisons between provinces are limited due to the smaller sample sizes among respondents. However, the percentages for these smaller clusters of young women who do experience violence in relation to first pregnancy are significantly high across all provinces, which indicates the seriousness of this association for these women. The experience of sexual violence in relation to early pregnancy and childbirth has serious lifetime implications for young women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and the health and protection of their children, as well as repercussions that contribute to intergenerational trauma and the perpetuation of violence. This is an issue that requires urgent prioritization in the prevention and response to GBV in Papua New Guinea.

Intergenerational effects of spousal violence

Purpose: Four specification tables were generated to look more closely at the intergenerational effects of spousal violence on ever-married women who witnessed physical violence by their fathers toward their mothers. Yes and No responses from Tables 16.11 (Spousal violence by husband's characteristics and empowerment indicator) and 16.16 (Violence by women against their husband by husband's characteristics and empowerment indicators) were put in a quadrant with the domestic violence indicator on whether the respondent had ever physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her.

The quadrant tabulation provided four different filters (Yes/Yes; Yes/No; No/Yes; No/No) generated at the national level to capture values by background characteristics (age; residence; marital status; number of living children; education; employment; wealth quintile) and seven forms of spousal violence (emotional; physical; sexual; physical and sexual; physical and sexual and emotional; physical or sexual; physical or sexual or emotional). Note that quadrant tabulation uses national-level data only and analysis is not able to be presented by regions and provinces.

Quadrant analysis supports the DHS finding on the importance of intergenerational violence and further reveals that the percentage of ever-married women aged 15-49 who did not witness their father beat their mother and who themselves do not use physical violence against their husband/partner (No/No) are consistently less likely to have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner across all background characteristics.

Table 8a presents the quadrant data on forms of violence experienced by the total percentage of all background characteristics to illustrate the significance of intergenerational effects of spousal violence.

Table 8a. Percentage of ever-married women age 15-49 who have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner by total percentage of background characteristics based on quadrant of whether or not respondent witnessed physical violence by their father toward their mother, and whether or not respondent ever physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her.

DHS Key Findings on Intergenerational Effects of Spousal Violence

Intergenerational effects of spousal violence are evident in Papua New Guinea. Women who report that their fathers beat their mothers are much more likely (70%) to have themselves experienced spousal violence than women who report that their fathers did not beat their mothers (57%) (DHS p. 295).

	Witnessed physical violence by their father toward their mother (%)	Did not witness physical violence by their father toward their mother (%)
Type of violence experienced by respondent	Respondent has physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her	
Emotional violence	81.2	46.6
Physical violence	83.2	53.0
Sexual violence	47.3	25.9

All three forms of violence	42.3	19.7
Respondent has not physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her		
Emotional violence	72.2	40.9
Physical violence	85.9	39.8
Sexual violence	49.0	21.6
All three forms of violence	40.8	16.8

To provide a snapshot of the range of responses based on background characteristics, Table 8b presents the highest and lowest percentages of quadrant data by background characteristics and whether the respondent has ever experienced physical or sexual or emotional violence. Of particular interest is the data that shows high percentages in the No/Yes quadrant (respondents who did not witness physical violence by their father toward their mother but who have physically hurt their husband/partner when he was not hurting her). This category has the highest percentages of five of the seven background characteristics, which suggests the importance of other factors that influence spousal violence apart from intergenerational violence. Further, it indicates the extent to which women also use violence against their spouse/partner. Age is significant here, where 97.8% of women aged 15-19 who have experienced spousal violence also report using violence against their spouse/partner.

Table 8b. Highest and lowest percentages of quadrant data on effects of intergenerational violence by background characteristics for the category have ever experienced physical or sexual or emotional violence (whether the respondent witnessed physical violence by their father toward their mother/whether or not respondent ever physically hurt husband or partner when he was not hurting her).

Background characteristic	Ever-married women aged 15-49 who have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner	
	Highest % of quadrant data	Lowest % of quadrant data
Age	97.8 No/Yes Age 15-19	41.4 No/No Age 45-49
Residence	96.1 Yes/Yes Urban	48.4 No/No Rural
Marital status	92.8 No/Yes Divorced/Single/Widowed	49.9 No/No Married/living together
No. of living children	91.7 No/Yes 3-4	44.5 No/No 5+
Employment	94.5 Yes/Yes Employed for cash	45.8 No/No Not employed
Education	94.8 No/Yes Elementary	45.2 No/No Elementary
Wealth quintile	93 No/Yes Highest	45.5 No/No Second

To provide a more in-depth view of associations between variables, Table 8c presents descriptive findings of quadrant data based on background characteristics. While this analysis does not serve to draw any predictive observations about the effects of intergenerational

violence, it does reveal the complexity of social and economic factors that influence the experience of violence.

Table 8c. Descriptive findings of quadrant data on effects of intergenerational violence across all forms of violence based on background characteristics

	Witnessed physical violence by their father toward their mother	Did not witness physical violence by their father toward their mother
Respondent has physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her		
Age	Youngest age cohort (15-19) is highest in two forms (physical violence and physical or sexual violence) Oldest age cohort (45-49) is consistently lowest across all forms of violence Lowest percentage overall: 18.4 for age 45-49 and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 94.9 for age 20-24 and physical or sexual or emotional violence	Youngest age cohort (15-19) is consistently highest in all forms of violence Age 40-44 is lowest in six of the seven forms of violence Lowest percentage overall: 13.5 for age 40-44 and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 69.0 for age 15-19 and physical or sexual or emotional violence
Residence	Urban residence is slightly higher in four of the seven forms of violence	Rural residence is slightly higher in five of the seven forms of violence
Marital status	Divorced/separated/widowed is consistently highest across all forms of violence except for physical or sexual violence where married/living together has highest percentage (86.1) Lowest percentage overall: 41.4 for married/living together and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 90.3 for divorced/separated/widowed and physical or sexual or emotional violence	Variable across all forms of violence Both married/living together and divorced/single/widowed are same percentage for physical or sexual violence (55.8) Lowest percentage overall: 19.5 for married/living together and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 62.0 for divorced/separated/widowed and physical or sexual or emotional violence
No. of living children	Variable across all forms of violence Lowest percentage overall: 30.3 for 0 children and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 91.4 for 0 children and physical or sexual or emotional violence	5+ children is lowest for five out of seven forms of violence Lowest percentage overall: 20.3 for 1-2 children and physical and sexual violence Highest percentage overall: 66.6 for 3-4 children and physical or sexual or emotional violence
Employment	Variable across all forms of violence but with employed for cash showing both lowest percentage for physical and sexual and emotional violence (24.5) and highest for physical or sexual or emotional violence (94.5), which is also highest across all quadrants	Employment not for cash is highest for five out of seven forms of violence Not employed is lowest for six out of seven forms of violence Lowest percentage overall: 16.4 for not employed and physical and sexual and emotional violence Highest percentage overall: 65.6 for employed not for cash and physical or sexual or emotional violence
Education	Elementary education is consistently lowest across all forms of violence	No education is lowest in three out of seven forms of violence

	<p>The second highest value is for higher education and physical or sexual violence (87.5)</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 15.9 for elementary education for physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 92.3 for secondary education and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Higher education is higher in five out of seven forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 19.7 for secondary education and physical and sexual violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 84.4 for higher education and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Wealth quintile	<p>Variable across all forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 25.6 for second quintile and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 91.9 for highest quintile and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Variable across all forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 14.4 for fourth quintile and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 66.1 for middle quintile and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Respondent has not physically hurt husband/partner when he was not hurting her		
Age	<p>Youngest age cohort (15-19) is consistently highest across all forms of violence which perhaps indicates the influence of peers on violent behaviour over that of intergenerational violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 18.4 for age 45-49 and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 97.8 for age 15-19 across all forms of violence (Note: only 7 respondents out of a total of 326 in this age cohort but the percentages in this quadrant across all ages are significantly high for all forms of violence compared to other quadrants)</p>	<p>Variable across all form of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 12.8 for age 25-29 and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 56.3 for age 20-24 and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Residence	<p>Urban residence is slightly higher across all forms of violence</p>	<p>Urban residence is considerably higher across all forms of violence</p>
Marital status	<p>Divorced/separated/widowed is consistently highest across all forms of violence except for emotional violence where married/living together has highest percentage (75.4)</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 40.0 for married/living together and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 92.8 for divorced/separated/widowed and physical violence, physical or sexual violence, and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Divorced/separated/widowed is consistently highest across all forms of violence except for physical or sexual violence where married/living together has slightly higher percentage (42.7)</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 16.7 for married/living together and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 52.1 for divorced/separated/widowed and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
No. of living children	<p>5+ children is lowest for five out of seven forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 33.6 for 5+ children and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 91.7 for 3-4 children and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Variable but 5+ children is lowest for four out of seven forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 17.0 for 3-4 children and physical and sexual violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 54.3 for 1-2 children and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Employment	<p>Employed not for cash is slightly higher across all forms of violence</p>	<p>Variable but employed not for cash is slightly higher across all forms of violence</p>

	<p>Lowest percentage overall: 35.7 for not employed and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 93.1 for employed not for cash and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Lowest percentage overall: 13.9 for not employed and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 58.8 for employed not for cash and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Education	<p>Variable across all forms but with elementary education consistently higher in six out of seven forms of violence</p> <p>Higher education is lowest in three forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 29.9 for higher education and sexual violence, physical and sexual violence, and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 94.8 for elementary education and physical violence, physical or sexual violence, and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Variable across all forms but with secondary education having both lowest and highest percentages across all forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 14.8 for secondary education and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 55.2 for secondary education and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>
Wealth quintile	<p>Variable across all forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 35.0 for lowest quintile and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 93.0 for highest quintile and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>	<p>Variable across all forms of violence</p> <p>Lowest percentage overall: 35.0 for lowest quintile and physical and sexual and emotional violence</p> <p>Highest percentage overall: 93.0 for highest quintile and physical or sexual or emotional violence</p>

Discussion

This report summarizes findings from the specifications sets that were generated from the DHS database by focusing on comparisons between regions and provinces. Comparative analysis indicates a high level of variation across different sets of data, both within and between regions and provinces. Comparative analysis also yields insights into associations between variables. Interpretation of patterns is limited by the variation in sample sizes between provinces, which becomes more apparent when looking closely at background characteristics. This variation indicates the complexity of intersecting factors related to the experience of violence. Nonetheless, observations drawn from the specification sets suggest important differences that can inform targeted interventions for specific populations.

Several points emerge as significant for further contextual and thematic analysis which can be addressed in the literature review.

- DHS findings and further analysis undertaken here indicate overwhelmingly that sexual violence is perpetrated by a woman's current spouse within marriage (77%). This finding together with the consistently high levels of women who have ever experienced sexual violence in all age cohorts indicates the seriousness of intimate partner violence for women in Papua New Guinea.
- High levels of physical and sexual violence during pregnancy point to the importance of ensuring access to family planning and support services for women and their partners, beginning at an early age and continuing throughout a woman's reproductive life.
- Analysis revealed significantly lower percentages in some provinces of never-married women to have experienced physical violence compared to married women and women who are divorced, separated, or widowed. Overall, this pattern suggests a strong association between marriage and the likelihood of experiencing physical violence, which also might be related to the meaning and practice of bride price exchanges in specific contexts.
- The associations between age at first marriage and education and wealth quintile show considerable variation across provinces which might relate to customary marriage practices where the education level is a factor in family decision-making regarding betrothal and bride price, and where lower household wealth limits opportunities for marriage, particularly in contexts where other demographic variables might influence wealth, such as a disproportionate ratio between young women and men due to outward migration, displacement or conflict.
- Analysis of empowerment measures on women's participation in decision-making suggest that higher age cohorts and higher number of living children confer status and more agency for women in decision-making across all categories. Likewise, higher education levels and employment, whether for cash or no cash, also show a pattern of higher participation across all regions and provinces. Of interest are the strong percentages in the younger age cohorts of women participating in decisions about their health.
- Understanding the variations at the provincial level on men's controlling behaviours and the ability of married women to negotiate sexual relations, especially in relation to age and education, would benefit from qualitative evidence from a life stage perspective to contextualize statistical associations between variables and gain insights on marital power dynamics. Qualitative evidence would also help to examine more closely the

social and economic factors that contribute to higher levels of controlling behaviours and spousal violence found among couples with higher educational levels.

- Analysis of men's controlling behaviours shows the significance of sexual jealousy but also points to the importance of kinship and family ties as a protective measure against marital control in some contexts. These themes provide an important focus for advocacy and prevention messages.
- Findings show that women with elementary or no education and those in the lowest wealth quintile are less likely to experience controlling behaviours than other women, whereas women's ability to negotiate sexual relations increases with increasing education and household wealth. While these factors are variable at the regional and provincial levels, analysis suggests a significant association between higher education and higher wealth quintile and increased violence and spousal controlling behaviours. This indicates that levels of education and wealth have different kinds of influence in interaction with other social and contextual factors and can be both protective against violence while also contributing to new forms of vulnerability.
- Understanding the significance of wealth in relation to the experience of violence requires further contextual analysis of economic factors including access to opportunities for income generation, household decisions regarding purchasing and consumption, as well as wealth redistribution related to social obligations.
- Analysis indicates the significance of intergenerational violence in association with spousal violence. However, it also revealed a high percentage of young women who have experienced violence and have also committed violence against their spouse or partner but have not witnessed parental violence. This suggests the importance of education that addresses GBV and SRHR at the elementary and secondary level to offset the likely influence of peers in the experience of violent behaviour over that of parental spousal violence.
- Analysis of the association between polygyny and violence suggests that polygyny cannot be viewed strictly as a traditional custom but as a marital practice that is taking hold in new settings in response to changing social and economic circumstances, with increased risks for physical and sexual violence in marital relations in urban areas and higher wealth quintiles.

Although the statistical analysis undertaken for this report focuses on women's experience of violence in PNG, it is important not to decontextualize this priority from the broader social dynamics of violence, including how power and control are structured and exercised within family units and communities. Preventing and responding to intimate partner violence cannot be pursued solely as a women's issue but requires a closer examination of the acceptance and use of all forms of violence in daily social life in PNG, and in particular, an understanding of violence as an expression of masculine identity.

Next steps

Next steps will involve conducting a literature review to augment these findings with thematic and contextual analysis drawn from available ethnographic studies conducted in specific geographic regions in PNG, available GBV and SRHR data at national, regional, and provincial levels collected by service providers, as well as policy, legislative and strategic frameworks. The literature review will also draw on available DHS cross-country analytical studies and other relevant international GBV and SRHR literature. The literature review will provide a thematic framework for the development of advocacy briefs and communication tools.

Next steps might also involve drawing up a series of provincial profiles based on the specification sets and tables generated for this exercise as a resource to guide policy and program planning. The intention of this analysis is not to rank regions or provinces by levels of spousal violence but rather to provide a more in-depth understanding of contextual factors based on associations between variables so that program interventions might be more suitably designed and focused.

One suggestion for making the statistics more relatable would be to draw up composite profiles of two women to illustrate the range of variables and how they combine to create a more holistic picture of the various factors that contribute to sexual and reproductive health and rights. This could be done by starting with the highest sample denominations and using the lowest and highest percentages of background characteristics across provinces.

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