

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Intimate Partner Abuse: Wife Beating among Civil Servants in Ibadan, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Wife beating is one of the most common forms of violence against women by husbands or other intimate male partners. Although violence against women is pervasive, there are only few studies documenting the magnitude of the problem especially among the working class. The civil service comprises of persons from all socio-economic levels and different backgrounds. They act in advisory capacity and assist those responsible for making state policy. Thus, 431 civil servants of the Oyo State government service were interviewed using a 44-item self-administered questionnaire. Results revealed that prevalence of wife beating was 31.3%. Ninety one (42.5%) men had been perpetrators, while 44 (23.5%) women had been victims. Consuming alcohol and growing up in an environment where parents fight publicly were significantly associated ( $p < 0.05$ ) with men beating their wives; while being young, unmarried and a parental background of fighting was significantly associated with women being beaten ( $p < 0.05$ ). Female respondents justified reasons for various types of domestic violence, including beating, more than the males ( $p < 0.05$ ). Younger respondents had significantly worse attitudes ( $p < 0.05$ ), while married and educated respondents had better attitude ( $p < 0.05$ ). "Not wanting the children to suffer" (60.7%) and "hoping that partner will change" (28.8%) were reasons given for remaining in abusive relationships. There is an urgent need for education of the women on their rights, sensitisation of the men on gender-based violence and punishment for perpetrators. Supportive care and counselling services should also be provided for victims of violence. (*Afr J Reprod Health* 2005; 9[2]: 54-64)

**Keywords:** Women, violence, abuse, workers

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