



Influence of Premarital Sexual Behaviour on Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Kabba-Bunu L.G.A of Kogi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Premarital sexual behavior among students in secondary schools is found to be common. However, studies in Nigeria and Kabba-bunu L.G.A in particular on the influence of premarital sexual behavior on academic performance have not dealt much with the contribution of students' premarital sexual behaviour thoroughly or adequately research on. This study attempted to highlight the extent to which students' premarital sexual behavior on academic performance. The study used 320 respondents drawn from eight (8) secondary schools in Kabba-Bunu L.G.A using simple random sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was developed and administered by the researcher on the respondents; data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics of Chi-square. The findings of the study revealed that students' involvement in premarital sexual behavior puts them into lots of relational and social problems which adversely affect their academic performance. It is recommended that, in order to help students in schools, establishing bounds between parents and teachers in bringing up the student is a necessary step; strengthening support systems in schools is another way of helping the student's.

Keywords: Influence, premarital, sexual behaviour, academic performance, students.

Introduction

Premarital sexual behavior among students appears to be a reality that cannot be ignored. Several studies reveal that students' premarital sexual activities are on the increase and common in most African schools (Jones & Espey, 2008, & Miyakado & Timothy; 2014 & Idoko, Muyiwa Agoha, 2015). Premarital sexual behavior is a sexual activities practiced by persons who are unmarried and it has been considered taboo in some cultures and sin in numerous religion (Stephen & Stephen, 2016).

Different studies identified factors influencing premarital sexual behaviour. These factors include peer pressure, family background, socio-economic status, religiosity, age, exposure to pornographic materials/mass media, and internet exposure and substance abuse among others (Mulugeta & Berherne, 2014, Adeola, 2014, Akibui, Gaboesellasi, Zekaria & Tsegaye, 2017 & Babatunde, 2019).

The incidence of premarital sexual behaviour engagement among students is high and may constitute problems including social, health and academic (Ngalinda, 1998 & Miyakado, 2013). Student's premarital sexual behaviour has resulted into increase cases of unplanned pregnancies, poor academic performance and eventually school dropouts (Miyakado, 2013). However, studies in Nigeria have not investigated the influence of premarital sexual behaviour on students' academic performance. Most of previous studies in Nigeria have examined factors influencing premarital sexual behaviour and its general effects on students (Adeola, 2014).

Evidence from other countries may help to understand the existing relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and academic performance. In the United States, a number of studies have shown that students who abstain from sex are more likely to graduate from high school (secondary school) and attend college than their sexually active peers (Sabia & Rees, 2009 & Miyakado & Timothy, 2014). Although, American context is not comparable to Nigeria due to differences of the two countries in socio-economic, educational and technological development. Nevertheless this study lays a good foundation to understanding

premarital sexual behaviour and academic performance of students in a different context including Nigeria and Kabba-bunu L.G.A in Kogi State.

Good academic performance is imperative in learning school materials (Timothy, 2010). However, this has not been the case in Nigeria and Kabba-bunu L.G.A of Kogi State in particular. The quality of education in Nigeria and Kabba-bunu has been deteriorated over time. Kabba-bunu local government area of Kogi State is experiencing students' poor academic performance signaled by failures of secondary school leavers, which sparked concern of the public especially parents and other educational stakeholders.

This study, however does not aim at explaining failure in Kabba-bunu L.G.A of Kogi State rather ascertaining the existence and impact of students' premarital sexual behaviour on their academic performance. Studies reveal that there is relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and their academic performance (Sabia & Rees, 2009). It was found that high school students who were dating exhibited consistently and significantly lower levels of academic achievement and academic motivation (Miyakado & Timothy, 2014). Another study on teenage sexual abstinence and academic achievement revealed that, teens who abstained from sex during high school years were substantially less likely to be expelled from school by 60%, 50% less likely to drop out of high school and almost twice as likely to graduate from college (Rector & Johnson, 2005). In support of this findings, the following arguments were offered: (1) when greater energy and interest were invested in sexual activity the drive for academic performance are likely to diminish; (2) sexually active students may become preoccupied with the present sexual activity, then long term academic goals may have diminished importance; and (3) students premarital sexual behaviours are inherently short term and unstable therefore, the collapse of intimacy relationships is likely to result in emotional torment and depression, which in turn, affect individual's academic performance (Miyakado & Timothy, 2014).

It is noted that unplanned or premarital pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDs, poor academic performance are typical problems students engaging in sexual activity are likely to encounter (Stephen & Stephen, 2016). However, this study emphasized on the relationship between premarital sexual behaviour and academic performance. Good academic performance is a core achievement desired by an educational institution that aims at achieving quality education. It should be noted further that, students are in schools for academic achievement. It is during this time when teenage students pass through a critical time of their life development including academic and eventually career choices. On the other hand, during the same time most adolescent students start experimenting with their sexual fantasies, which may compromise with their academic performance. (Kelly, 2001; Sant rock, 2006).

Since there is no study in Nigeria and in Kabba-bunu in particular which intensively explored or explained the relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and its influence on academic performance, this study therefore attempts to highlight the influence/or impact of premarital sexual behaviour on the academic performance of secondary school students in kabba-bunu local government area of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Culturally, sex is supposed to be preserved till marriage, but it has been observed that premarital sexual behaviour has remained persistent and prevalence in this contemporary time due to various contributing factors and has had negative influences on the life of the students involved.

Studies as affirmed that student are unlikely to complete secondary school education due to their involvement in premarital sexual behaviour. The non-completion of a secondary school education limits the life earning potentials among the teenage population which could perpetuate the cycle of impoverishing among them. Based on this, the study is therefore concerned with the influence of premarital sexual behaviour on students' academic performance in Kabba-bunu Local Government Area of kogi State, Nigeria.



Purpose of the Study

The study examined the influence of premarital sexual behaviour on the academic performance of secondary school students in Kabba-bunu local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Research Question

Will premarital sexual behaviour influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Kabba-bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State?

Research Hypothesis

Premarital sexual behaviour will not significantly influence secondary school students' academic performance in Kabba-bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. This design was used because it is best suited for data collection, organization, presentation and analysis for the purpose of describing the occurrence of an event or phenomenon within a specified group. All public secondary school students in Kabba-bunu Local Government Area constituted the population of the study. The sample comprised of three hundred and twenty (320) respondents selected from the population. From the fourteen public secondary schools in the L.G.A eight (8) schools were randomly selected for the study and from each school, simple random sampling was used to select twenty (40) students that participated in the study. The instrument used for the collection of data was a self-designed questionnaire which was validated by three experts in the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education, Kogi State University. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through test-retest method within two weeks interval and the scores were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient of 0.75. To analyse the data collected, inferential statistics of multiple regression.

Result

Hypothesis 1: Premarital sexual behaviour will not significantly influence secondary school students' academic performance in Kabba-bunu Local Government area of Kogi State.

Table 1

Summary of multiple regression on the influence of premarital sexual behaviour on secondary school student's academic performance.

Variables	β	t	P	R	R^2
Premarital sexual behaviour and students' academic performance	.01	12	<0.5	.02	16.92

The results in table revealed that premarital sexual behaviours ($=0.1$, $t=12$, $p<.05$) did exert significant influence on secondary school student's academic performance. This implies that premarital sexual behaviour had significant influence on students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study revealed that premarital sexual behaviour had a significant influence on students' academic performance in the study area. This result supported the finding of Mlyakabo and Timothy, (2014) who found that most sexually active student perform poorly in their studies and faced several problems which compromised their academic lives.

Rector and Johnson, (2005) Mlyakabo, (2013) and Timothy (2010) are consistent with findings of this study, when they opined that, most sexually active students perform poorly in their studies and faced several problems, which compromised their academic lives. It is taken that poor academic performance is an indication of negative effect of students' sexual relationship to academic wellbeing. The logic is that, students who are sexually active may become preoccupied with their sexual activity and have diminished importance academic goals. They further noted that psychological disturbance is also associated with students' sexual relationship which are resulting from handling student's sexual relationship in schools. It is the fact that, students' sexual relationship is inherently short-term and unstable, which means when it collapses, the result is likely to be emotional turmoil and depression. And if students are psychologically disturbed or depressed, these are likely to have negative consequences on academic prospects culminating to undermined academic performance or total loss of education opportunity. For example, in Nigeria, pregnancy leads to total expulsion from schools. Rustications and other punishments or dropping out of schools have direct impact to students' academic life.

Furthermore, Quatman, Sampson, Robinson and Watson, (2001) and Timothy, (2010) noted that students who are dating exhibit consistently and significantly lower levels of academic motivation. They further affirmed that students who abstain from sex during high school studies are substantially less likely to be expelled from school, less likely, to drop out of high school and more likely to attend and graduate from college.

Also Schvaneveldt, et al, (2001) argued that, when greater energy and interest are invested in sexual activity; the drive for academic performance is likely to diminish and that early initiation of sexual intercourse correlates with poor academic performance.

Conclusion

The study concluded that premarital sexual behaviour influence students' academic performance in secondary school in Kabba-bunu L.G.A of Kogi State. And that student is likely to drop out of school due to pregnancy and therefore have their education truncated.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

- That sexual and reproductive health education should be taught in secondary schools as relevant and appropriate sexual and reproductive health information is necessary for secondary school students physical and intellectual health.
- That teachers, parents, and community at large have to effectively play their role to bringing up the children to become responsible individuals. Sexual and reproductive health education is necessary in this context, which should be channeled from different angles of human interactional opportunities; home, school, play grounds, churches and mosques.
- That the government should support diligently and harmoniously all the initiative to help young generation in the countries especially students.
- That counselling and guidance systems in secondary schools should be made strongly enough to carry activities that will help learners or students get the best out of their school lives. Students sometimes get into severe problems because they lack support and help network. They lack services where to seek help when they are stressed, depressed, or confused in making



decisions. The current Nigerian education system gives the discipline masters positions to provide counselling and guidance. This limits students' opportunities to effectively use the help system, as they fear to be considered undisciplined if they talk about involved in sexual relationship. Therefore, there should be an independent unit in each school dealing with students for counseling and guidance.

Lastly, sexuality education curriculum should be implemented in schools as a matter of urgency. The levels, to which it be decided according to levels of the students and each level should have its contents that inform of the basics about sex and sexuality matters. Demystifying sex and sexuality should be the foremost advocated so that the gaps that are held and which hinders discussions of sexual matters between adolescents and adults can be bridged. Provision of adequate and age relevant information about sex and sexuality to adolescents should be prioritized. Peer education in schools should also be initiated and where already exist be strengthened to help students share experiences and educate themselves on different matters including sex and sexuality. The peer groups formed in schools should have specific aims and goals to achieve at different times of their operation. Peer groups should be visited by specialists in different walks of life to share experiences with them, and educate group members for their betterment.

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