



SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS OF UNDERGRADUATES OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KWARA STATE



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Abstract

Sexuality among youths has become a source of great concern due to its attendant effects. Thus, the objective of this study was to investigate the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. The study also examined whether or not variables of gender and school type had significant influence on the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study while purposive sampling and proportional stratified sampling techniques were used to draw a sample of 640 undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state. The main research instrument employed for data collection was “Sexual Behaviour of Undergraduates Questionnaire (SBUQ). The instrument was subjected to test re-test reliability technique and a coefficient of 0.65 was obtained. Four research questions were raised and three research hypotheses formulated and tested. Data collected were computed using frequency counts; percentages, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The hypotheses generated were tested at 0.05 alpha level. The main findings of the study indicated deep kissing with the opposite sex, sex activities for pleasure and manual stimulation as the main sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state, Nigeria. The study found a significant difference in the sexual behaviours of respondents on the basis of school type but no significant difference on the basis of gender. The implications of the findings are that undergraduates who engage in premarital sexual behaviours may be prone to STDs and other infectious diseases which could impact negatively on their family life. In line with the findings of the study, it was recommended that stakeholders, especially the school counsellors and teachers should provide guidance to students on developmental challenges and help youths to abstain from risky sexual behaviours. The study also stresses the need for regular sensitisation

of undergraduates on positive attitude towards sex. Guidance and counselling units should be established in tertiary institutions so that guidance services can be provided on reproductive health.

Keywords: Sexual Behaviour, Adolescent, Undergraduates, Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction

A large number of undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are in the stage of adolescence which is a period of psychological, physical, social and emotional changes. Adolescence has been described as a stage of transition from childhood to adulthood. In the opinion of Akinboye (1985), adolescence is a period of heightened heterosexual awareness often accompanied by high degree of sexual drives. The sex drives tend to get adolescents involved in different kind of sexual behaviours most especially during dating. Thus, sexual behaviours can be described as those activities that produce arousal and increase the chance of orgasm. According to Olatunji (2000), sexual behaviours involve of all activities that could lead to intercourse including; light and deep kissing, petting, breast fondling, genital stimulation, oral genital sex, coitus masturbation holding of hands and sexual intercourse. In a study of teenage involvement in sexual activities in Ilorin, Abogunrin (1992) identified eleven sexual behaviours of adolescents. These include kissing, dating, sexual intercourse, looking at sexy pictures, watching pornography, caressing, having sugar daddy/mummy, necking, masturbation, heterosexual petting and homosexuality. Premarital sexual activities have become an issue of increasing concern in the society in recent times. There is also evidence of increasing youth involvement in premarital sexual activities especially among Nigerian adolescents (Owuamanam, 1992)

The reasons for the increase involvement of teens in various premarital sexual activities especially in tertiary institutions could be hinged on factors such as personal freedom, environmental factors, biological factors and peer influence e.t.c. For instance, Araoye (1992) noted that adolescent have peer pressure to become sexually active at an early age. He opined that peer pressure on an individual at the stage of adolescence is one of the factors that make many undergraduate students to think of engaging in premarital sex. Olatunji (2000) also observed that in the pursuit of education, students leaves their homes for school and are no longer under the strict supervision of their parents. Therefore most of them enjoy personal freedom and got exposed to a different lifestyle more than ever before and may get involved in sexual affairs which they regard as due mark of civilization.

However, undergraduates' involvement in sexual activities is not without consequences. Some of which include high rate of unwanted pregnancies and abortion, high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and psychosocial problems (Creatsas, 1997). Premarital sex have resulted to unwanted pregnancies, illegal abortion, dumping of unwanted babies in motherless homes and increase in the rate of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and Human Immune

Deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/ AIDS), (Owuamanam, 1995 & Adegoke, 2003).

This study therefore investigated the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state. This is with a view of creating awareness on the consequences of premarital sexual behaviours as well as suggesting meaningful intervention strategies to curb the menace of risky sexual practices among youths.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of sexuality among youths is a very delicate one to handle. The matter is particularly crucial at the turbulent adolescence stage when special attention is needed to ensure that the youths do not derail as they search for sexual identity. The declining age at sexual maturation and the increasing age at marriage partly because of the upsurge of interest in higher education among youth have resulted in a big biosocial gap, lengthening between reproductive maturity and marriage (David, 2004).

The changing youth life style caused by globalisation of communication glamorisation of sex in the media and break down of traditional system of sexual control are additional major challenges confronting the youth. These have led to declining age at sexual debut, increase of sexual activities characterised by unstable short-term unions, premarital cohabitation and multiple sex partnership. Majority of the undergraduates are unmarried youths and on entry into higher institutions they acquire independence from secondary school restrictions and their parents. This increase in autonomy manifests a very permissive attitude and increased sexual experimentation. Unfortunately, the youths engage in risky sexual behaviours with poor knowledge of the consequences and therefore hardly take any precautions to protect themselves against the adverse consequences of these activities. Sex has posed a great problem to every society especially the problems that are linked with health and psychosocial well-being of the individual and the society.

In Nigeria, problems associated with adolescent sexual behaviours include high rate of teenage pregnancy, a rising incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, high rate of illegal abortion, sexual crimes, child abandonment, school dropout and contraction of venereal diseases (Owuamaram, 1982; Abogunrin, 2002; Adegoke, 2003; Adeyemi, 2004 & Nwabuisi, 2004).

The increase in adolescent sexual activities as established by Adebuseye (1991), Araoye and Fakeye (1998) and Olatunji (2000), if left unchecked, it might lead to a situation in which a generation of youth may not be able to contribute meaningfully to national development. There is therefore, strong need for youths most especially undergraduates of tertiary institutions to make desired adjustment in their sexual behaviours and to be sufficiently informed about the consequences of their dating and sexual behaviours on their later life.

Abogunrin (2002) carried out research on sexual behaviour, condom use and attitude towards HIV and AIDS among adolescents in Nigeria. The result of the study revealed that holding of hand with the opposite sex, and heterosexual petting and hugging are the most common sexual behaviour expressed by respondent. A significant difference is observed in adolescent manifestation of sexual behaviour on the bases on sex and age.

Omotola (2008) also conducted a study on sexual practices and condom use among unmarried female undergraduate in the University of Ilorin. The result of the study revealed that, majority of female undergraduate have experience of sexual practice and condom use and thus there is no significant difference in the in the sexual practice and condom use of unmarried female undergraduates on the basis of their age, level of study and religion.

The previous researches carried out focused on sexual behaviours of undergraduates using different locale and variables. This study was therefore needed in order to obtain data on the sexual behaviours among undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the sexual behaviour of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study also examined whether or not sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State would differ on the basis of gender, and school type.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study:

1. What are the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State?
2. Will gender influence the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State?
3. Will school type influence sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institution in Kwara State

Research Hypotheses

In order to give the research a better focus, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

1. Gender will not influence the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state
2. School type will not influence the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state.

Method

The research design adopted for the study is a descriptive survey. The population for the study comprised all the undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state, while the target population consisted of ten (10) selected tertiary institutions in Kwara state. The procedures used in selecting sample for this study were purposive sampling and proportional stratified sampling techniques. The purposive sampling method was used to select ten tertiary institutions in Kwara. The institutions covered include: University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State University Malete, Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Kwara State College of Education Technical Lafiagi, Kwara State College of Education Oro, College of Education Ilorin, Kwara State College of Arabic and Islamic studies, Ilorin, School of Nursing and Midwifery Ilorin, School of Health Technology Offa. In addition, the proportional stratified sampling technique was used to select six hundred and forty (640) respondents according to the variables of the study from the ten (10) tertiary institutions selected for the study. The variables are gender and school type.

Instrumentation

The main instrument used to collect data for this study is a questionnaire designed personally by the researcher after a careful review of the related literature and tagged “Sexual Behaviour Questionnaire” (SBQ). The questionnaire comprises sections A and B. Section A focuses on the demographic data of the respondents which include information on age, gender, religion, and school type and section B contains (15) items on undergraduates’ sexual behaviour. It was patterned after the Four Point Likert Type Rating Scale Format. For section B, 4 was the highest score while 1 was the lowest. That is, $1 \times 15 = 15$ was the lowest obtainable score while $4 \times 15 = 60$ was the highest obtainable score.

In order to ascertain the validity of the instrument, the draft of the questionnaire was given to three lecturers in the Department of Counsellor Education to vet for content validity and it was later subjected to the test re-test method of reliability. Thus twenty (20) undergraduate students in Kwara State, Ilorin who did not form a part of the respondents for the study were first tested using the questionnaire and at an interval of four weeks; the questionnaire was re-administered to the same group of students. The two sets of scores were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula. The correlation co-efficient obtained was 0.62 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Based on this, the instrument was adjudged reliable for the study.

The data obtained from the instrument were analysed using frequency counts, simple percentage and ranking order for the descriptive data while t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis were used to test the null hypotheses generated.

Results

The data collected in section A were analysed using frequency counts, and percentage and rank order analysis of mean values was used to answer the main research question, while the t-test and ANOVA statistical techniques used to test the null hypotheses formulated. Significant differences were determined at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender and School Type

| No. | Variables | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | Gender | | |
| | Male | 264 | 41.2 |
| | Female | 376 | 58.8 |
| | Total | 640 | 100.0 |
| 2 | School type | | |
| | University | 188 | 29.4 |
| | Polytechnic | 299 | 39.8 |
| | College of Edu. | 99 | 15.5 |
| | School of Nursing | 124 | 19.3 |
| | Total | 640 | 100.0 |

Table 1 indicates that 264 (41.2%) of the respondents were males while 376 (58.8%) were females. Finally, it reveals that 188 (29.4%) of the respondents were students from the University, 229 (35.6%) were students from the Polytechnic, 99 (15.5%) were students from the College of Education and 124 (19.4%) were students of the School of Nursing and Health Information Technology.

Research Question: *What are the sexual behaviours of undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State?*

Table 2: Rank Order Analysis of Sexual Behaviour of undergraduates of Tertiary Institutions in Kwara State.

| Item No. | I usually engage in: | Mean | Rank |
|----------|--|------|------------------|
| 2 | deep kissing with the opposite sex | 2.38 | 1 st |
| 10 | sexual activity only for pleasure | 2.37 | 2 nd |
| 6 | manual stimulation of the opposite sex | 2.27 | 3 rd |
| 9 | sexual activity only for reproduction | 2.25 | 4 th |
| 4 | breast fondling | 2.22 | 5 th |
| 5 | sexual intercourse with the opposite sex | 2.21 | 6 th |
| 1 | watching pornographies | 2.14 | 7 th |
| 3 | genital fondling with the opposite sex | 2.10 | 8 th |
| 7 | sex for material gains | 2.06 | 9 th |
| 13 | Masturbation | 2.02 | 10 th |

| | | | |
|----|--|------|------------------|
| 11 | sexual relationship with sugar daddy /mummy | 1.88 | 11 th |
| 12 | sex with lecturers | 1.87 | 12 th |
| 15 | having sexual relationship with the same sex | 1.87 | 12 th |
| 14 | having multiple sex partners | 1.86 | 14 th |
| 8 | group sex (3 or more people consorting). | 1.86 | 14 th |

Table 2 presents data on the sexual behaviour of the respondents. Items 2, 10 and 6 ranked as top three items. The common sexual behaviours indicated by tertiary institution students in Kwara state included “engaging in deep kissing with the opposite sex” “engaging in sexual activity only for pleasure” and “manual stimulation of the opposite sex” with mean scores of 2.38, 2.37 and 2.27 respectively. What this finding revealed was that tertiary institution students in Kwara state engages in sexual behaviours that could lead to sexual intercourse in respective of their marital status. This result is in consonance with the findings of Olatunji (2000) who observed that sexual behaviour does not connote coital experience or sexual intercourse alone; it is inclusive of all activities that could lead to intercourse eventually and therefore described sexual behaviour to include; light and deep kissing, petting, breast fondling, genital stimulation, oral genital sex, coitus masturbation holding of hands and sexual intercourse. The same conclusion was reached by Eruesegbefe and Ogunsanya, (2005) that undergraduates engage in sexual activities like married couples. They engage in sexual relationship with the opposite sex in the popular boyfriend/ girl friend relationship, or sometimes with no serious intimacy but casual sex habit.

However, items 8, 14 and 15 ranked as the least three sexual behaviour exhibited by undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. That is “engaging in group sex (3 or more people consorting), “having multiple sex partners” and “having sexual relationship with the same sex” with a mean scores of 1.86 and 1.87 respectively.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant difference in the sexual behaviours of respondents on the basis of gender.

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviation and t-value of Respondents’ Sexual Behaviour on the basis of Gender

| Gender | No | Mean | Standard Deviation | Df | Calculated t-value | Critical t-value |
|--------|-----|-------|--------------------|-----|--------------------|------------------|
| Male | 264 | 39.20 | 7.09 | 638 | 22.41 | 1.96 |
| Female | 376 | 20.30 | 10.49 | | | |

Table 3 presents data on the mean, standard deviation and t- value of respondents' sexual behaviour on the basis of gender. The table shows that the calculated t-value of 22.41 is greater than the critical t- value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. On this basis, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference in the sexual behaviour of undergraduates of tertiary institution on the basis of gender is rejected.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference in the sexual behaviour of respondents on the basis of school type.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Sexual Behaviour of Respondents on the basis of School Type

| Source | SS | df | Mean Square | Cal. F-ratio | Crit. F-ratio |
|----------------|-----------|-----|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Between Groups | 40.80 | 2 | 1707.43 | 9.00 | 3.00 |
| Within Groups | 125736.11 | 637 | 189.70 | | |
| Total | 125776.92 | 639 | | | |

Table 5 presents data on the Analysis of Variance of respondents' sexual behaviour on the basis of school type. The table shows that the calculated F-value 9.00 is greater than the critical F-value 3.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the sexual behaviour of undergraduates on the basis of religion is rejected.

Table 4: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) comparing the means of sexual behaviour of respondents on the basis of School Type

| Duncan's Grouping | Mean | N | Group | School Type |
|-------------------|-------|-----|-------|----------------------|
| A | 25.96 | 124 | 2 | School of Nursing |
| B | 30.80 | 99 | 1 | College of Education |
| B | 32.58 | 188 | 1 | University |
| B | 33.65 | 229 | 1 | Polytechnic |

Table 5 shows the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) result used to determine which of the groups' mean(s) led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA results of table 6. The DMRT result indicates that group 2 with a mean score of 25.96 differed significantly from group 1 with mean scores of 30.80, 32.58 and 33.65 respectively. Hence, the significant difference noted in the ANOVA results on table 4 was as a result of the fact that all groups differed from one another significantly. Thus hypothesis nine was rejected.

Discussion

In this study, it was found that the main sexual behaviours among undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state include “engaging in deep kissing with the opposite sex” “engaging in sexual activity only for pleasure” and “manual stimulation of the opposite sex”. This finding may be attributed to the level of exposure to sexual videos as well as the porosity of students' accommodation in various tertiary institutions due to non-availability of hostel and poor monitoring of students on the part of the parents which has fuelled rampant cases of sexual behaviours.

The study also revealed that there was a significant difference in the sexual behaviour of undergraduates of tertiary institution in Kwara state based on gender. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that both male and female students differ in their sexual behaviour. This is confirmed by the higher mean scores of the male respondents. The findings of the study conforms with a study by Erusagbefe and Ogunsanya (2005) who found that male adolescent were more involved in activities leading to sex than the females. Also is in line with the findings of Mturi and Gaearwe (2014) whose study found that the proportion of virgin females was twice as males. The reason for this may be as result of the fact that the male undergraduates are usually the initiators of sexual activities and are most likely to indulge in risky sexual behaviours as compared to their female counterparts.

No significant difference was found in the sexual behaviours of the respondents based on school type. Students from school of nursing had lower mean score than o students from other institutions. This may be due to the awareness of dangers on pre-marital sexual activities among the nursing students. The finding corroborate that of Olatunji (2000) who found that sex education has influence on the attitude of adolescents towards sexual activities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Kwara state engaged in deep kissing with the opposite sex; in sexual activities only for pleasure and manual stimulation of the opposite sex. There was no significant difference in the sexual behaviour of undergraduate of tertiary institution in Kwara state on the basis of gender. However, a significant difference was found in their sexual behaviour based on school type.

Counselling Implications of the Findings

The study found that undergraduates of tertiary institutions do engage in sexual activities, there is therefore the need for the youth to be educated on adverse effects of engaging in premarital sexual activities. The results obtained have important implications for various stakeholders and particularly counsellors are expected to guide the students. Makinwa and Adebuseye (1991) noted that youths are faced with a lot of problems, which they have no skills to handle. Guidance and counselling is the way out towards helping the youths abstain from socially undesirable behaviours like engaging in risky sexual activities before marriage. Behavioural change is the ultimate goal of counselling. Counselling today includes developmental, preventive and remedial roles at every stage of individual life (Adegoke, 2004). The counsellors should provide different group counselling setting that can encourage youths to examine the dangers inherent in premarital sexual activities.

Counselling at the tertiary institution level should serve as a preventive measure which will help student make wise and informed decision in their dating and sexual behaviours. Guidance counsellors in tertiary institution should emphasize the need for youths to engage in healthy dating and sexual behaviour. Finally, Counsellors should facilitate sex education programme that will focus not only on the biological aspect of reproduction but also on psychological issues. More so, education about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases and can also be inculcated in the programme as a way of encouraging good sexual habits.

Recommendations

In line with the findings the study, it was recommended that students should be exposed to premarital counselling before they dabble into marriage. Higher institution students preparing for marriage or dating relationship should be guided on the adverse effects of dating for fun and engaging in pre-marital sexual activities before marriage. Premarital counselling could be included in the General studies courses.

Counselling units should be established in higher institutions of learning so that students could receive appropriate counselling on reproductive health and sexuality. Also, counsellors should encourage positive cultural practices such as avoidance of sex before marriage and discourage unhealthy dating and sexual behaviours among undergraduates of higher institutions of learning.

Finally, workshops and seminars should be organised from time to time in tertiary institutions to promote healthy dating and positive sexual behaviours.

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