



Research Article

Volume-03|Issue-05|2022

Socio-Personal Variables and Students Tendency to Involve in Unlawful Sexual Activities in Uyo Local Education Committee

Nyorere, Ogho Ifeanyi*¹, & James, Idopise Okon¹¹Department of Educational Foundation, Guidance and Counseling, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Article History

Received: 23.05.2022

Accepted: 27.05.2022

Published: 31.05.2022

Citation

Nyorere, O. I., & James, I. O. (2022). Socio-Personal Variables and Students Tendency to Involve in Unlawful Sexual Activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. *Indiana Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(5), 74-80.

Abstract: The study determined the relationship between socio-personal variables and students' tendency to involving in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. Two a piece of the study purposes, research questions and hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance. Correlational research design was adopted while the population of the study comprised 6,603 Senior Secondary Two (SS2) Students in the fifteen (15) public secondary schools in Uyo Local Education Committee. A sample size of 378 Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students which represents 5 percent of the study population was selected for the study using Taro Yamane sampling formulae. Random sampling method was used to sample 9 public secondary schools as well as 42 students from each of the sampled schools for instrument administration. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Socio-personal Variables and Students Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities Questionnaire (SVSTIUSAQ)" was used for data collection. Data generated were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics and the results showed a very high positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and peer pressure and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in the study area. Conclusion was drawn from the findings while the study recommended among other things that school counsellors and parents should ensure that students are given functional sex education so as to help them uphold a positive view of themselves on issues relating to sex.

Keywords: Unlawful sexual activities, peer pressure, self-efficacy.

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INTRODUCTION

Unlawful sexual activities among university students appear to be a subject of academic discourse in this 21st century. Also, adolescence is a stage in life that is considered very turbulent as the psychological and physiological changes that accompany this period predispose young people to a number of risky behaviours. According to Okeke & Deborah (2016), adolescents are considered the most vulnerable group in terms of risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) because of their lifestyle which is predominantly marked by adventure seeking, experimentation and risk taking. The adolescent is caught in between the web of childhood and adulthood and as such, finds it difficult to either live as a child or an adult. At this stage in life, they undertake many actions that have the potential of causing serious harm to their overall health and well-being.

Unlawful sexual activities could be detrimental to students' health and well-being. Prinstein & Greca-Annette (2011) noted that students who engaged in inappropriate sexual behaviour are often disposed to high risky behaviour and problems like HIV/AIDs or STI, unwanted pregnancy, high rate of abortion, poor school performance, high school dropout rate, conduct disordering and other forms of psycho-social problems. In view of the above consequences of premarital sexual behaviour, Odu & Akanle (2008) stated that sexual activeness and risky sexual behaviour still persist,

ranging from casual sex, same sex escapade, multiple sex and transactional sex.

In Nigerian society, young men and women have different interest, motivations and strategies for engaging in premarital sexual relationships. For women, Aderibigbe & Araoye (2008) observed that unlawful sexual relationship is usually done for the enhancement of their marriage prospects, proving their fertility to their future husbands, and for financial benefits. Men on the other hand, are more likely to engage in sexual relationships before marriage, for sexual experience and sexual satisfaction. As a result of these differences, adolescent boys and girls have different patterns of sexual behaviour which may be as a result of social and personal factors such as peer pressure, self-efficacy among others.

One of the socio-personal variables which may influence students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities is peer pressure. As students begin to socialize with their peers, they tend to shift from values they learnt from home socialization to reliance on their peers. Hammer and Bangers (2010) stated that a commonly cited reason for initiating sexual relations among adolescents is pressure from society and their peers. In their quest for a sense of belonging and to avoid rejection by the group, the adolescents succumb to this pressure. Blum and Mmari (2014) noted that students whose friends are sexually active or who

perceive their friends to be sexually active are more likely to be sexually active themselves.

According to Chilisa *et al.* (2013), self-efficacy is defined as the individual's belief in their capability and capacity to carry out goal-directed behaviours within an activity context. It is how confident one feels about tackling certain tasks, challenges, and contexts. The authors found self-efficacy to be a strong predictor to students' attitude towards abstinence and safer sex practices. It was suggested by the authors that students who have confidence in their ability to avoid sex before marriage tend to abstain from such act, while those who view it as a difficult task tend to be involved in premarital sexual practices. Therefore, based on this backdrop that the present study aimed at determining the relationship between socio-personal variables and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee is carried out.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Theory of Reasoned Action by Ajzen (1975)

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) was proposed by Ajzen in 1975, and was derived from social psychology setting, which anchored on the study of attitude and behaviour. The theory was borne largely out of frustration with traditional attitude-behaviour research, much of which found weak correlations between attitude measures and performance of volitional behaviours. According to Ajzen, the components of TRA are three general constructs: Behavioural Intention (BI), Attitude (A), and Subjective Norm (SN), TRA suggests that a person's behavioural intention depends on the person's attitude to the behaviour and subjective norms ($BI = A + SN$). If a person intends to display a behaviour, then it is likely that the person will do it.

According to Ajzen, individuals' attitudes and norms are not weighed equally in predicting behaviour. Indeed, it depends on the individual and the situation that these factors might have different effects on behavioural intention. The author added that a weight is associated with each of these factors in the predictive tenet of the theory. For example, a person might be the kind who cares little for what others think. If this is the case, the subjective norms would carry little weight in predicting your behaviour.

The relevance of this theory to this research study is that it explained explicitly that students' involvement in unlawful sexual activities may be the result of their predictive reasons for such act and their belief. For instance, a female student might prefer hugging and roaming round the street at night because she has observed other people, including her fellow peers, doing same. Such attitude may culminate into

premarital sex, unwanted pregnancy as well as rape. Some may hold the belief that involving in unlawful sexual activities is the fastest way of making money. The aftermath of such beliefs and intentions may subsequently become premeditated attitude.

The Concept of Unlawful Sexual Activities

Unlawful sexual activities are those sexual relationships between opposite sex who are not yet married. According to Onyebuchukwu *et al.* (2015), unlawful sexual activities are the act of engaging in sexual relationship (intercourse) before marriage. Unlawful sexual activities are those sexual activities practiced by people who are unmarried or married. According to Nabaraj and Saraswati (2017), premarital coital activity can also be seen as a sexual activity practiced by people who are unmarried. From the above definitions, premarital coital activity could be seen as any sexual relationship done by members of opposite coital activeness out of wedlock.

Peer Pressure and Students Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Peer groups are important socialization agent. It is another strong predictor of students' coital activeness. Peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his/her attitudes, values in order to conform to group norms (Kirk, 2010). According to Ryan (2009), peer pressure is found when people of similar age or age brackets encourage or urge other people of the same age bracket to do something or to keep from doing something else, irrespective if the person wants to do it or not. This is because as students begin to socialize with their peers, they tend to shift and value from what they learnt from home socialization to reliance on their peers'. A number of students see some of their peers as role models.

Modelling refers to individual changes in cognition, behaviour, or effects that result from the observation of others (Ryan, 2009). Observing others exhibit a particular behaviour or voice a certain opinion such as playing truant, can introduce an individual to new behaviours and viewpoints that may be different from his or her own. Observation also enlightens an individual on the consequences of such behaviour and opinions. Depending on these consequences, observation of a model can strengthen or weaken the likelihood that the observer will engage in such behaviour or adopt such beliefs in the future.

Studies have shown a strong correlation between peer pressure and premarital sexual relationship among students. One of such study was conducted by Alo *et al.* (2016), and the author found that the most common reason for initiating sexual relations among adolescents was pressure from their peers. In their quest for a sense of belonging and to avoid rejection by the group, the adolescents succumb

to this pressure. Rena (2009) also found that young people whose friends are sexually active or who perceive their friends to be sexually active are more likely to be sexually active themselves.

Self Efficacy and Students Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Self efficacy is one of the strong predictor of unlawful sexual activities among students. According to Hughes *et al.* (2011), self efficacy is the individual's belief in their capability and capacity to carry out goal-directed behaviours within an activity context. It is how confident one feels about tackling certain tasks, challenges, and contexts. Self-efficacy is known to be the complex and dynamic system of beliefs which one holds true about himself or herself. Self-efficacy has become an important subject of discussion in field of education, and is determinant of students' social behaviour in school.

Self-efficacy is a characteristic inherent in the personality of every individual. Different individuals have self- efficacy in varying qualities. According to Pelemo (2008), self efficacy is therefore defined as an organized and consistent way an individual thinks, feels, and reacts to issues concerning his or herself arising from his/her personal experience in life. Self-efficacy is the set of feelings and cognition about oneself. It influences our thoughts, behaviours, and performances in school. Okonkwo *et al.* (2009) noted that because of the personal belief to engage safe sex, most students are actively involved in the use of condom as a form of protective behaviour, which enhances the spread of premarital sexual activities. It thus seems apparent that one's belief in their ability to use condoms effectively is a determinant of unlawful sexual activities among students. This corroborates the findings of Okeke & Deborah (2016), whose finding revealed a strong association between self-efficacy and premarital sexual relationship among students. Most students hold strong belief in their capacity to use condom effectively. This is as a result of self-efficacy. The authors found that most students have been engaging in premarital sex which in most cases resulted in unwanted pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases. Also, Oladepo & Fayemi (2011) found that self-efficacy was a strong predictor to students' intention to have sexual partner in schools.

Significance of the Study

The issue of students' involvement in unlawful sexual activities has become a serious social problem among secondary school students in Uyo Local Education Committee. As observed by the researchers, adolescence in most public schools often engage in unlawful sexual activities for obvious reasons, including: economic needs satisfaction, peer influence, ostentation, poor knowledge of sex education and so on. It is very common to observe students of opposite sex involvement in unlawful sexual relationship on the

guise of "boy/ girl relationship". Sometimes, they do this in order to satisfy their personal needs such as purchase expensive phones and other personal effects.

Most students as observed by the researchers, usually exhibit inappropriate sexual behaviours as masturbation, homosexuality, lesbianism, rape coitus, sexual harassment, sexual bullying, among others. Their involvement in such anti-social behaviours have often resulted in contacting sexually transmitted diseases such as such as HIV/Aids, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, school attrition and poor academic performance in school subjects, among other things. Although the Federal Health Management Board (FAMB) has been engaging in series of campaigns to create public awareness on the dangers of unlawful sexual practices, the social menace still persists. Therefore, the present study sought to determine the relationship between socio-personal variables and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between socio-personal variables and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- The relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.
- The relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- What is the relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee?
- What is the relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee?

Research hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.
- There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involve in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee

RESEARCH METHOD

Design of the Study

The correlational survey design was adopted for the study. This design is used whenever a researcher wants to find out the magnitude and direction of relationship that exist between the dependent and independent variables (Udoh & Joseph, 2005). Therefore, this design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researchers to measure the relationship between socio-personal variables and students tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consisted all the 6,603 Senior Secondary Two (SS2) Students in the fifteen (15) public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State (Secondary Education Board, Research and Statistic Division 2021).

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 378 Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students which represents 5 percent of the study population was selected for the study using Taro Yamane sampling formulae. To get adequate schools sampled, random sampling method was used to select 9 public secondary schools out of 15. Thereafter, hence, 42 students were selected from each of the sampled schools using hat and draw method of random sampling, which gives a total of 378 sampled respondents.

Instrumentation

Researcher-structured questionnaire titled “Socio-personal Variables and Students Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities Questionnaire (SVSTIUSAQ)” was used for data collection. The items were framed in line with the research questions and hypotheses. The instrument had two parts. Section (A) contained 10 items, that is, 5 item each on socio-personal variables while section (B) contained 8 items measuring students’ tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities. SVSTIUSAQ was measured in a four-point rating scale of: Strongly Agree (SA) = Agree (A) = Disagree (D)=Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The respondents were requested to give their own opinions or views to the instrument using the symbol (√).

Validation of the Instrument

To ensure the face validity of the instrument, two copies of the instrument were given to two

validates from the Department of Educational Foundation, Guidance and Counselling, University of Uyo to assess the suitability or otherwise of the items in the instrument. These experts modified some of the items that were not adequate, while the good items were allowed to remain. The inputs and corrections made by the evaluators and that of the researchers’ supervisor were used to compile the final copy for administration.

Reliability of the Instrument

To establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha reliability technique was used. Here, the instrument was administered to 40 SS2 students in a selected school not included in the population sample. The instrument was administered and data were collated. Data was subjected to correlation and Cronbach Alpha statistics was applied in testing the internal consistency of the instrument. This yielded the overall reliability co-efficient of .82 for socio-personal variables and .73 for items measuring students’ tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities respectively. This index, according to Udoh & Joseph (2005), is a high reliability index since the reliability co-efficient is above .50. Therefore, the instrument was deemed reliable for use in the study.

Method of Data Collection

The research instruments were personally administered on the respondents in their respective schools by the researcher together with two trained research assistants. Also, permission from the respective principals were sought to allow the respondents respond to the items in the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

Data generated were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions. The same statistical tool (PPMC) was used for testing of the null hypotheses by comparing the r-value with the critical r-value, so as to determine the significance of the relationship between the variables all at .05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between peer pressure and students, tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee?

Table 1. Correlation Analysis of Responses on the Relationship between Peer Pressure and Students Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Variables	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Remark
Peer Pressure	378	5769	89973					
Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities	378	12256	404126	189217	0.91			Very High Positive Relationship

Result in Table 1 shows a very high positive relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. This is evident in the correlation co-efficient of 0.91. This implies that students who always share ideas about sex and whose

friends are sexually active are more likely to be sexually active themselves.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee?

Table 2. Correlation Analysis of Responses on the Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Students' Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Variables	N	Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities		Σxy	r-value	Remark
		Σx Σy	Σx ² Σy ²			
Self-efficacy	378	5768	90682			
Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities	378	2256	404126	190757	0.88	Very High Positive Relationship

Result in Table 2 shows a very high positive relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. This is shown on the correlation coefficient of 0.88. The implication of this result is that if students believe in their ability to engage in safe sex, the tendency of involving in unlawful sexual activities would increase.

Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of Responses on the Relationship between Peer Pressure and Students' Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Variables	N	Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities		Σxy	r-value	r-crit	Decision
		Σx Σy	Σx ² Σy ²				
Peer Pressure	378	5769	89973				
Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities	378	12256	404126	189217	0.91	0.061	*

* = Significant; P<.05; df = 376; critical r = 0.061

Result in Table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.91 is greater than the critical value of 0.061 at 376 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative retained. This result implies that there is a significant relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee

Table 4. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of Responses on the Relationship Self-Efficacy and Students' Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities

Variables	N	Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities		Σxy	r-value	r-crit	Decision
		Σx Σy	Σx ² Σy ²				
Self-efficacy	378	5768	90682				
Tendency to Involvement in Unlawful Sexual Activities	378	12256	404126	190757	0.88	0.061	*

* = Significant; P<.05; df = 376; critical r = 0.061

Result in Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.88 is greater than the critical value of 0.061 at the degree of freedom of 376 and at .05 level significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is retained. This implies there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The researchers made a combined discussion of findings of the research questions and hypotheses tested.

Results from research question one and hypothesis one showed that a very high positive and

significant relationship between peer pressure and students' tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. This finding is in tandem with the finding of the study on conducted by Alo *et al.* (2016), who found that most common reason for initiating sexual relations among adolescents was pressure from their peers. In their quest for sense of belonging and to avoid rejection by the group, the adolescents succumb to this pressure. Rena (2009) also found that young people whose friends are sexually active or who perceive their friends to be sexually active, are more likely to be sexually active themselves. Hence, it is observed from this finding that peer pressure could encourage unlawful sexual activities among students.

Results from research question two and hypothesis two revealed self-efficacy and student's tendency to involvement in unlawful sexual activities in Uyo Local Education Committee. This finding is in agreement with the finding of the study conducted by Okeke & Deborah (2016), whose finding revealed a strong association between self-efficacy and premarital sexual relationship among students. Most students hold strong belief in their capacity to use condom effectively. This is as a result of self-efficacy. Through the use of condom, the authors found that most students have been engaging in premarital sex which in most cases resulted in unwanted pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases. This finding is also in line with the finding of the study conducted by Oladepo & Fayemi (2011). The authors found that self-efficacy was a strong predictor to students' intention to have sexual partner in schools. From the above finding, the researcher wish to observe that self-efficacy is strongly associated with students' unlawful sexual activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that self-efficacy as well as peer pressure tend to lure students into involvement in unlawful sexual activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- School counsellors and parents should ensure that students are given functional sex education so as to help them hold a positive view of themselves on issues about sex.
- Parents and teachers should sensitize the students on the negative effects of engaging in unlawful sexual activities for material possessions.

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