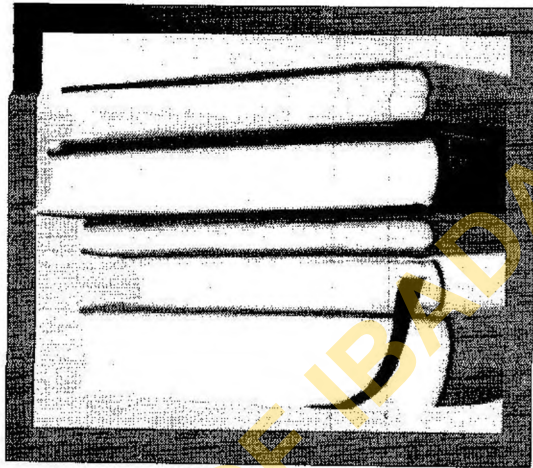


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CONTENTS

Contemporary Issues in the Administration of Higher Education in Africa Rosemary Seiwah Bosu	1 - 36
Lecturers' Perceptions of Performance Management in a Nigerian University Ayotunde Adebayo & Omotuyole, Christy. O.	37 - 65
Analysis of Students' Academic Performance in Civic Education and Implications for Educational Planning in Bayelsa State, Nigeria Irene Uzezi Berezi & Victory Collins Owede	67 - 81
Influence of Vocational Education on Women Empowerment: The Experience of Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State Oladeji Stella Olabisi	83 - 97
An Explorative Study of Street Children's Social Competence as Instrument of National Development in Nigeria Oladiti Abiodun Akinola	99 - 115
Managing Institutional Facilities: Maintenance Culture and Strategies Akinsolu, A.O.; Raji Dolapo Omotayo & Adeyemi, Adeline	117 - 133
Social Factors as Predictors of Education of Females in Postgraduates Studies in Lagos State, Nigeria Ishola, Olayinka Sadiat	135 - 148
Adolescents' Premarital Sexual Behaviour: The Roles of Peer Pressure, Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Relationship Adetola O. Adeyemi	149 - 167

Influence of Sexuality Education on the Attitude of Adolescent Islamic Studies Students to Pre-Marital Sex in Lagos State, Nigeria Luqman Lekan Adedeji & Oyejide, Anuoluwapo Itunu	169 - 180
Resolving Conflict for Sustainable Peace in the Nigerian School System using Education as a Foothold Esther M. Alao	181 - 191
Do Women Need Special Right to Formal Education in Nigeria? Ojo, Ronke Christiana	193 - 213

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**ADOLESCENTS' PREMARITAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR: THE ROLES
OF PEER PRESSURE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARENT-
CHILD RELATIONSHIP**

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Abstract

In recent times, there are records of prevalence of mortality among adolescents owing to sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unwanted pregnancy, abortion, induced pregnancy and related issues. This disastrous situation is traceable to adolescents' engagement in premarital sexual behaviour. This motivated an examination of peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship as correlates of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. The study adopted descriptive survey design of the ex-post facto type. Three hundred adolescents were randomly sampled from secondary schools in Ibadan South-East Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Data were collected using reliable instruments (Premarital Sexual Behaviour Scale $\alpha=0.87$; Parental-Child Relationship Scale $\alpha=0.77$; Socio-economic Status Scale $\alpha=0.73$; Peer Influence Scale $\alpha=0.75$). Three research questions were raised and answered at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The study discovered that peer pressure ($r = .883, P<0.01$), parental socio-economic status ($r = -.203, P<0.01$) and parent-child relationship ($r = -.536, P<0.01$) significantly correlated with adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. Among others, it was recommended that parents should build a healthy relationship with adolescents so as to be able to monitor and guide them against premarital sexual behaviour while school administrators and policy makers should intensify the teaching of sex education in secondary schools in order to acquaint adolescents with the dangers inherent in premarital sexual behaviour.

Key words: Peer pressure, Socio-economic status, Parent-child relationship, Adolescents, Premarital sexual behaviour

Introduction

The engagement of adolescents' in and exposure to sexual activities before marriage is often referred to as premarital sex behaviour. In its simplest form, premarital sexual behaviours refer to sexual activities perpetrated prior to marriage. Such behaviours include, kissing, hugging, romancing, and fondling of the genitals, oral sex, and sexual intercourse. Premarital sexual behaviours have become a subject of attention among scholars and researchers in recent decades. Martin, Martin, and Martin (2001) argue that the number of young adults engaging in premarital sexual behaviours has increased to 63% in the last 20 years. Also, the World Health Organization (2003) submits that premarital sexual activities among young adults are high and increasing in Africa. This heightened adolescent sexuality may be caused by a number of factors, including bodily changes, sexual hormones, social forces, and rehearsal for adult gender roles (Caal, 2008). Late adolescence (15-19 years) is particularly important, as sexual debut and experimentation often take place during this period (Cotton, Mills, Succop, Biro and Rosenthal, 2004). This may be well placed if one considers the fact that premarital sexual behaviours, such as kissing, fondling, oral sex and sexual intercourse, could be associated with teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in young people especially undergraduates (Kaestle, Halpern, Miller, and Ford, 2005; Aaron, 2006).

Kenya Human Rights Commission/Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance (2010) found, in a health survey of sexually experienced teens, that over 13% of women and over 27% of men were reported exchanging money gifts or favours for sex. This could be as a result of high incidence of poverty in the country. The same report indicated that over 16% of teenage females reported first sexual intercourse by age 15. Among women within the age bracket of 20 to 24, 49.4% reported sex for the first time at age 18. Among teenage males, 8.3% reported first sex at age 15; while 36.3% of those within the age bracket of 20 to 24 indicated having sex for the first time. The resultant effects of early sexual activities, especially among females, are usually induced abortion and dropout from school, because most of them are not ready for pregnancy. National Demographic and Health Survey (2003) found that more than 600,000 Nigerian women obtain abortions each year, and that one-

third of this population comprised of adolescents. The study also indicated that up to 80% of Nigerian patients with abortion related complications were adolescents.

Unlike in the last decade, when the culture of premarital sexual behaviours used to be a taboo in Nigeria, present-day youths have abandoned this valued tradition for the inglorious culture of premarital sexual activities (Kaestle, et al 2005). The Nigerian culture seriously frowns at premarital sexual behaviours, especially among females (Alo, 2008), because they are more prone to negative consequences of premarital sexual behaviours, such as gynecological problems, unwanted pregnancies and STIs than the males. Females are, therefore, expected to keep their virginity until they get married. As a result of the rate of economic change in Nigeria, virtually every citizen of the country is in financial distress and serious agitation for a friendlier financial climate in the country. This has created a new perception to the situation; parents do not have time for their children; and teachers' lessons are becoming shorter because they want to catch up with other tasks that will create additional income since the one from the government is inadequate. This situation in the country demands re-examination of some social factors as they impact adolescent premarital sexual behaviour.

Adolescence is the most important period of human life and society's success in various fields of life depends a lot on how this group has been shaped. This is the focus of this study. Adolescence is a period of transition during which change in group belongingness from childhood to adulthood takes place and creates a gap in an individual that contributes to uncertainty of behaviour, and it is characterized by introduction into risky behaviours, like violence, unprotected sexual intercourse, and drunk driving (Ankomah, Mamman-Daura, Omoregie and Anyanti, 2011)

One of the factors that could influence premarital sex is peer pressure. Peer pressure can be referred to as friends' coercion or initiation into engaging in a particular behaviour. It can also be conceptualised as series of behaviour adolescents are coerced into engaging in due to friends, age mates or playmates. It could be said that adolescents who have more satisfying relationships with their mothers and perceive maternal disapproval of sexual behaviour delay the initiation of sexual behaviour. The most important person who influences a decision about sexual debut depends on the stage

of adolescence: parents' norms are more important in early adolescence, but their influence declines with age; then peer norms become more important in later stages, such as middle and late adolescence (Lerner, 2012). The literature on adolescent sexual behaviour has emphasized that adolescents' knowledge about sex is not from parents but through peer groups. They learn the important topic of sex education in negative manners (Kirby, Laris, and Rolleri, 2007). Alo (2008) argues that, in most societies adolescents learn to become adults by observing, imitating and interacting with the grown-ups around them. In other words, adolescents today are socialized more within the confines of their peers than with adults (Didi, 2004) which go a long way in determining the type of sexual behaviour they exhibit.

Peer groups are important influence throughout young adults' life, but they are more critical during the developmental years of adolescence. There is often a controversy about the influence of peer group versus parental influence, particularly during adolescence. The power of the peer group becomes more important when the family relationships are not close or supportive. If the parents are largely unavailable, the children may turn to their peer group for emotional support.

Another factor that could affect premarital sex is parental socio-economic status. Parental socio-economic status is often considered as a combination of parents' various social stratifications such as prestigious career, social class, residential area, and financial capacity. When discussing socio-economic status in an adolescent-related study, it is often referred to as parents or family socio-economic status. This can be predetermined by the livelihood of families, satisfaction of female adolescent needs, and healthy living. Poverty or economic depravity, in particular, has also been strongly linked to premarital sexual activity among young people especially among girls. In several studies, it has been speculated that girls who are inadequately provided for in terms of basic needs are often exposed to the temptation of seeking financial rewards from young and older men for sexual favours in return (Mensch, Clark, Lloyd, and Erulkar, 2001).

Catering for female adolescents might be very challenging because their well-being is associated with financial maintenance. It is often reported that the effect of household wealth on females as compared to boys was statistically significant. This suggests that,

while residence in wealthy families may insulate girls from the temptations of receiving financial favours from sexual partners in return for sex, the same may not necessarily be the case for boys. However, given the circumstances under which premarital sex may occur, these previous studies might not clearly account for the attitude of the youth towards premarital sex. For instance, 20% of all young girls interviewed in Kisumu, Kenya, and Ndola, Zambia, said their first early sexual encounters involved physical force (Ochieng, Kakai, and Abok, 2011). Similarly, about 25% of 15–24 year-old girls in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa said they had been 'tricked' or 'persuaded' into their first sexual experience (Aaron, 2006). This raises the pertinent question as to whether this is driven by attitude or the observed behaviour among the youth is inconsistent with the attitudes towards premarital sex.

Studies also suggest that parent-child relationship could affect premarital sex. Parent-child relationship typically refers to parental warmth, love, support, parent-child closeness, and child attachment to parents (Meschke, Bartholomae, and Zentall, 2011). It can also be conceptualized as communal friendship between parent and their wards. It creates a world whereby adolescents become confident in discussing their private issues with their parents (Whitaker and Miller, 2000).

Healthy parent-child relationship makes adolescents develop confidence and trust in their parents' decision and guidance on sexual issues and other significant aspects of their lives. Ngom, Magadi, and Owuor (2003), note that adolescents who enjoy good relationship with their parents often display well-developed social skills and emotional regulation, lively and pleasant dispositions, and self-confidence about their ability to master tasks. However, adolescents with low parent-child relationship are often anxious, withdrawn, unhappy and frustrated. Baumrind (1991) claims that healthy parent-child relationship provides better chance for adolescents to perform well in school and are less likely to engage in antisocial behaviours. Observation has shown that parents who refuse to get close to their children would give room for peers and other environmental factors. Similarly, parents have been found to be afraid of answering sex-related questions when asked by their adolescent children (WHO, 2003). Failure to answer such questions makes adolescents attracted to outsiders. Parents are expected to facilitate the socialization of their children to parental values and

guidance. Evidence from longitudinal and cross-sectional studies indicates that parental connectedness constitutes a protective factor against early sexual initiation, unwanted pregnancy or birth, and at-risk sexual activity in adolescence (Lema, 2005). Therefore, it is imperative to study the sexual behaviour of adolescents with a view to proffering solutions towards improving or enhancing the sexual behaviour of Nigerian youths, having observed inconsistencies in the studies on factors predisposing adolescents to premarital sexual behaviour.

Purpose of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship predicted adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. Specifically, the study

1. investigated the relationship between peer pressure, socio-economic status, parent-child relationship and adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour;
2. determined the joint contribution of peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship on adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour; and
3. examined the relative contribution of peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship on adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study

1. What is the relationship between the independent variables (peer pressure, socio-economic status, parent-child relationship) and the dependent variable (adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour)?
2. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship) on the dependent variable (adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour)?
3. What is the relative contribution of independent variables (peer pressure, socio-economic status, and parent-child relationship) on the dependent variable (adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour)?

Methodology

This section presents the procedure that was adopted in carrying out the study. This included research design, variables for the study, target population, sampling procedure and sample, instrumentation, as well as data collection and analysis procedures.

Design

The study adopted the correlation approach. This design was appropriate because the researcher was interested in investigating the predictive weights of the independent variables on the criterion which is adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. Besides, the researcher did not have control over the concomitant variables, as their manipulation had already occurred.

Population

The population for this study consisted of all senior secondary school adolescents in Ibadan South-East Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Multistage sampling was adopted for this study. The first stage involved a random selection of 15 secondary schools from the entire population. The second stage involved the selection of 20 adolescent students from the senior secondary school two students (SS2). In all, a sample of three hundred (300) adolescent students was randomly selected. This was used as a representative of the population.

Research Instrument

A questionnaire was used for data collection because of the literacy level of the study population. The adaptation was made after extensive review of the literature. The scales were pilot-tested a week before the real administration to certify that they were fit and did not have ambiguous items. The questionnaire was divided into six sections.

Premarital Sexual Behaviour Scale (PSBS)

The 10-item Premarital Sexual Behaviour Scale was developed by Basen-Engquist, Masse, Coyle, Parcel, and Banspach (1999). It measures sexual activities adolescents are involved in. Samples of the items "Light petting is okay for me before marriage if I am

engaged to be married," and "Light petting is okay for me before marriage with sex worker". It is rated on a 4-point response format, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 4= strongly agree. High score on the scale indicates high premarital sexual behaviour, while low score indicates low premarital sexual behaviour. It recorded Cronbach alpha = 0.87.

Parental-child Relationship Scale (PRS)

The 10-item Parent-child Relationship Scale was adapted from Small and Kerns (1993). It measures adolescent experience of parent-child relationship. Samples of the items read: (1) "my parent(s) know where I am after school"; and (2) "If I am going to be home late, I am expected to call my parent(s) to let them know". Students choose out of five possible responses, ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha for the 10-item scale was .84. The scale has been shown to have construct validity as evidenced by the review of the scale: "The Parent-child relationship Scale has been used in at least three studies involving nearly 6,000 adolescents...higher levels of parental guidance have been related to lower levels of adolescent risk-taking and sexual activity". The instrument was pilot-tested on thirty participants that were not part of the population used for the study. The scale recorded a reliability coefficient of 0.77 using Cronbach alpha.

Socio-economic Status Scale (SES)

Socio-economic status was measured by Socio-economic Status Scale (SES) developed by Salami (2000). It was developed to measure the educational, occupational and social status of the parents of adolescents. The items in the scale requested personal data of the participants also. These items include parents' occupation (10 marks), parents' level of education (12 marks), parents' residence (5marks), parents' possession of necessary and luxury items (29 marks), giving the total maximum score of 56. All these are summarized to indicate the respondents' family socio economic background as being high or low. The highest score obtainable is 56, while the least is 6.

The test-retest reliability of the scale when administered among 100 secondary school students in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria was 0.73, with an interval of three weeks. This instrument was validated by correlating the scores of 60 secondary school students

on the SES scale with their scores on Socio-economic Status Scale by Ipaye (1977). The correlation obtained between their scores on two instruments was 0.64. This is an indication of a fairly high construct validity of the present instrument.

Peer Influence Scale (PIS)

The 9-item Peer Influence Scale was used to measure the peer group influence. It was adapted from Howard (2004). It measures the degree of peer influence in the decision of adolescents. It is rated on a 3-point response format, ranging from 1= disagree to 3= agree. High scores imply positive peer group influence from the positive direction or negative peer group influence from the negative direction. The Cronbach alpha value reported by the author was 0.75.

Procedure for Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the participants in their various schools. The participants were adequately briefed on the need to cooperate with the researcher. They were also assured of confidentiality of their responses. The data collection spread over two weeks, during which about 320 copies of the questionnaire were administered but 300 copies were finally retrieved. These were scored and the data obtained were subjected to analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

The data were collected and analysed with the aid of Pearson product moment correlation and multiple linear regression analysis to test the three research questions at 0.05 significant level. Using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences was deployed for analysis. The results obtained were also interpreted.

Results

This segment presents the findings drawn from the study. The analysis was guided by the research questions.

Research Question 1:

What is the relationship between the independent variables (peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) and the dependent variable (pre-marital sexual behaviour)?

Table 1: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between study variables.

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev	1	2	3	4
Premarital sexual behaviour	58.1600	12.82378	1.000			
Peer pressure	43.6200	12.09006	.883**	1.000		
Parent child relationship	47.0700	8.39643	-.536**	.658**	1.000	
Socio economic status	46.9767	11.43644	-.203**	-.120*	-.094	1.000

*Correlation is significant at 0.05(2-tailed)

Table 1 above reveals the relationship of each independent variable (peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) with the dependent variable (pre-marital sexual behaviour). Pre-marital sexual behaviour positively correlated with peer pressure ($r = .883$, $P < 0.01$), but it had negative relationship with parental socio-economic status ($r = -.203$, $P < 0.01$) and parental-child relationship ($r = -.536$, $P < 0.01$). This implies that the higher the influence of peer pressure, the higher the engagement of students in premarital sexual behaviour. Conversely, the higher the influence of parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status, the lesser the likelihood of pre-marital sexual behaviour among adolescents is.

Research Question 2:

What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) on the dependent variable (Premarital sexual behaviour)?

Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of premarital sexual behaviour

R =.891						
R Square =.794						
Adjusted R square =.792						
Std. Error =5.85477						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39023.935	3	13007.978	379.481	.000 ^b
	Residual	10146.385	296	34.278		
	Total	49170.320	299			

Table 2 above indicates significant joint contribution of the independent variables (peer pressures, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) to the prediction of adolescents' pre-marital sexual behaviour. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions $R = 0.891$ and multiple R-square = 0.794. This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 79.2% (Adj.R²= .792) variance in the prediction of premarital sexual behaviour. The other factors accounting for the remaining variance were beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis showed that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the premarital sexual behaviour, $F(3, 296) = 379.481, P < 0.01$.

Research Question 3:

What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) on the dependent variable (Pre-marital sexual behaviour)?

Table 3: Relative contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of pre-marital sexual behaviour.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	26.487	2.492		10.630	.000
	Peer pressure	.982	.037	.926	26.313	.000
	Parent-child relationship	-.126	.054	-.083	-2.357	.019
	Parental socio-economic status	-.111	.030	-.099	-3.726	.000

Table 3 above shows that parent-child relationship, parental socio-economic status and peer pressure are potent predictors of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. The most potent factor was peer pressure (Beta = .926, $t = 26.313$, $P < 0.01$), followed by parent-child relationship (Beta = $-.083$, $t = -2.357$, $P < 0.05$), and parental socio-economic status (Beta = $-.099$, $t = -3.726$, $P < 0.01$). This implies that secondary school adolescents are likely to display high pre-marital sexual behaviour if peer pressure influence remains very high. Besides, adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour is likely to reduce if parental socio-economic status and parent-child relationship continue to increase.

Discussion of Findings

The first research question examined the relationship between the independent variables (peer pressures, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) and the dependent variable (premarital sexual behaviour). It was discovered from the study that pre-marital sexual behaviour positively correlated with peer pressure, but had negative relationship with parental socio-economic status and parental-child relationship. This implies that the higher the influence of peer pressures the higher the engagement of students in premarital sexual behaviour is. However, the higher the influence of parent-child relationship and parental

socio-economic status, the lesser the likelihood of premarital sexual behaviour among adolescents is.

The result of this study is in-support of Whitaker and Finer (2007), who showed that the effects of peer norms toward initiating sex and using condoms were buffered by the parent-teen discussions about them. Similarly, this result was in agreement with Casey et al. (2008) who found that, as children make the transition from childhood to adolescence and engage in the process of identity formation, their reliance on parents and siblings as the sole sources of influence and decision-making begins to change. Increasing interaction with other role models, such as best friends, peers, teachers and community members begin to expand their sphere of influence. Peer attitudes, norms and behaviour as well as perceptions of norms and behaviour among peers have a significant and consistent impact on adolescents' sexual behaviour. This study also showed that when learners believed that their friends are having sex, they were more likely to have sex also. This is a justification that peer influence could make adolescent to start exploring various sexual activities.

The outcome of this study also supports Whitaker and Miller, (2000) who found that parental approval indirectly predicted the adolescent sexual behaviour regardless of the girls' age. Similarly, this study is in congruence with previous findings that emphasized that parent-adolescent processes regarding the message of sexual abstinence and safer sex are important for developing sex education programmes (Jemmott, Sweet Jemmott, and Fong, 2012).

The result of this study concerning parental socio-economic status corroborates Alo (2008) who concluded that the rates were associated with socio-economic differences of the regions and reflected differences in employment, education, peer models, levels of information on sex and contraception/access to contraception, acceptance and access to abortion and cultural differences. She claims that teenagers in more affluent suburbs with better education and career prospects were better informed and motivated to use contraception and abortion.

The second research question examined the joint contribution of the independent variables (peer pressures, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) on the dependent variable (Pre-marital sexual behaviour). The result

revealed that there was a significant joint contribution of the independent variables (peer pressures, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) to the prediction of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 79.2% variance in the prediction of premarital sexual behaviour.

The result of this study agrees with Mehmet (2006) who found that the presence of the parents was linked to lower rates of premarital sexual behaviour, as well as other risky behaviours including drug, alcohol, tobacco use and emotional distress. Likewise, Miller (2002) asserts that low discipline is also a risk factor for adolescent girls to experience unwanted sex (which, in turn, is a risk factor for earlier intercourse).

The place of independent variables (socio-economic status, peer pressure and parent-child relationship) is essential in the variation of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. The result of this study is also in support of Sim (2000), who examined the age difference in parent and peer influences on girls' premarital sex. Ochieng et al. (2011) equally argue that peer pressure often contributes to adolescents' sexual experimentation. Similarly, Park (2011), in a study in Sydney's western suburbs (lower socio-economic area), found that most pregnancies for the young women in the study occurred early in the relationship, were unplanned and no contraception was used at the time of conception. The young women did not see abortion or adoption as an alternative and accepted their fate (of being a parent).

The third research question examined the relative effect of the independent variables (peer pressures, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status) on the dependent variable (premarital sexual behaviour). The result showed that the three predictors (parent-child relationship, parental socio-economic status and peer pressure) are potent predictors of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. The most potent factor was peer pressure, followed by parent-child relationship, and parental socio-economic status. This implies that secondary school adolescents are likely to display high pre-marital sexual behaviour if peer pressure influence remains very high. In addition, adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour is likely to reduce if parental socio-economic status and parent-child relationship continue to increase.

This result supports Jemmott et al. (2012) who confirmed that peer association has been indicated as one of the strongest predictors of adolescent sexual behaviour. The youth that do not engage in sex tend to have friends who also abstain. Those that are sexually active tend to believe that their friends are sexually active as well. Similarly, UNICEF (2006), in a longitudinal study using 910 students to predict the intention of using condoms found that peer norms to delay sexual behaviour had a stronger protective effect in the youngest group and oldest group than in the 15-year-olds' group. However, most often in Nigeria, adolescents' peers influence their behaviour towards premarital sexual which could go a long way in initiating them into it.

The result of this study also agrees with Didi (2004), who notes that parent-child relationship and adolescent sexual activity have a complex relationship. Low levels of parent-child relationship are associated with a variety of risky behaviours, including unprotected sex, drug use, and drug trafficking. This implies that parent-child relationship could reduce adolescents' engagement in premarital sexual behaviour.

Socio-economic status was also discovered to be a significant predictor of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. This result agrees with Mehmet (2006), who found that teenage females living in a socio-economically disadvantaged urban environment were more likely to be sexually experienced. There is extensive evidence to suggest that economic factors play a significant role in teenage pregnancy and birth rates. Similarly, Ochieng (2011) argues that women in lower socio-economic groups were less likely to have the required knowledge and resources to access contraception or abortion services.

Conclusion

This study investigated peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status as correlates of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. It was discovered that peer pressure, parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status significantly correlated with adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour. It was discovered that peer pressure was the strongest predictor of adolescents' premarital sexual behaviour, followed by parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status. By implication, increased influence of peer pressure will increase the

likelihood of adolescent engagement in premarital sexual behaviour; while increased influence of parent-child relationship and parental socio-economic status will reduce the tendency of adolescents' engagement in premarital sexual behaviour.

Recommendations

Based on the findings drawn from this study, the following are therefore recommended:

- i. Parents are encouraged to develop healthy relationship with their adolescent children by spending time together to discuss issues of life which can afford them the opportunity to speak their minds.
- ii. Parents should endeavour to monitor the friends their children keep and guide them in their decision-making about issues of life.
- iii. Adolescents are encouraged to trust their parents rather than their peers in resolving personal-social matters. They are as well enjoined to visit the school counsellors on their social-personal issues which they might not be able to discuss with their parents.
- iv. Parents are admonished to make provision for their children's needs so as to restrict them from seeking financial assistance from outsiders which might expose them to premarital sexual behaviour or sexual abuse.
- v. School counsellors should orientate adolescents on the dangers inherent in premarital sexual behaviour, such as exposure to HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

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