



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEER INFLUENCE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR OF IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract:

This study examined the relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents in South East Zone of Nigeria. The population of this study comprised 137, 095 in-school adolescents in senior secondary II in public secondary schools. The sample of the study was 1200 senior secondary II in-school adolescents. Three research questions and one hypothesis were formulated for the study and the study adopted correlation survey design. Two instruments, namely: Peer Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) with reliability coefficient of 0.76 and Sexual Behaviour Questionnaire (SBQ) with reliability coefficient of 0.78 were developed by the researcher and used for data collection in the study. The research questions in the study were answered using mean, standard deviation, simple regression analysis while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The result obtained indicated what constitutes peer influence for in-school adolescents as making friends on Facebook and doing homework with friends of opposite sex, among others; In-school adolescents' sexual behaviour in South East Nigeria are attraction to their opposite sex and enjoying sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol, among others. There exists a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents, and a weak contribution of peer influence on sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others, that more counsellors should be employed, retained and empowered to help in-school adolescents regulate their engagement with peers and sexual behaviour.

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1. Introduction

Peer influence and peer pressure are factors that may exert far reaching influence on human behaviour. The co-mingling and intermingling of these factors at one time or another have attracted the interest of scholars and researches across board, with intent of ascertaining the extent to which they affect behavioral outcomes. Peer influence is investigated in relation to its likely influence on in-school adolescents' sexual behaviour.

However, sexual behaviour practiced by in-school adolescents is a norm contrary to societal ethics and values. Sexual behaviour simply means the way and manner individuals react or conduct themselves towards everything that has to do with sexual intercourse (Nwagbo and Ubachukwu, 2001). Udadi (2007) opined that sexual behaviour may be leading to multiple sexual intercourse, prostitution, and abnormal sexual practice such as homosexuality, lesbianism, premarital, extramarital sexual intercourse and indiscriminate use of condom. Udadi, also stated that sexual behaviour is a total action of adolescents, in handling their sexual impulses. Sexual behaviour as defined by Omeje, Ekwueme and Omeje, (2013) is all sexual actions and responses related to pleasure feeling. Also, according to Abba and Echodu in Omeje et al. (2013), sexuality behaviour is an individual ability to experience or express sexual feelings. However, the definition of sexual behaviour as conceived by Gebhard (2014) is any activity, solitary between two persons, or in a group that induces sexual arousal. Gebhard went further to stress on two major determinants of human sexual behaviours; the inherited sexual response patterns that have evolved as a means of ensuring reproduction and that are a part of each individual's genetic inheritance, and the degree of restraint or other types of influence exerted on the individual by society in the expression of his sexuality.

However, sexual behaviour can be used interchangeably with sexual activities or sexual practice. Sexual behaviour may also include conducts and activities which are intended to arouse the interest of another, such as methods used to display behaviour that will attract the partner such as foreplay. From the foregoing, sexual behaviour in the context of this study is all sexual act displayed by in-school adolescents for sexual gratification.

Sexual behaviours among in-school adolescents are a reality for instance, a study carried out in Imo State by Utobo (2002) among male adolescents revealed that 76 percent of the students had heterosexual intercourse. Data from another survey conducted in Enugu state among secondary school girls aged 13-18 years showed that 17 percent of the girls are sexually active and out of these, 35 percent have multiple sexual partners (Onuiwu & Echefuns, 2004). The outcome of sexual behaviours may make adolescents particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and high-risk behaviours. Often the outcome of this behaviour can have adverse consequences such as unplanned pregnancies (for the females) and sexually transmitted infections. In agreement with the aforementioned, Udogo (2011) commented on the rate of sexual debut among adolescent

in South East Nigeria and the consequences following it which Udogo enumerated as; unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease (STD), uterine cancer and abortion which usually lead to high rates of mortality. From the foregoing, it is evident that adolescent sexual behaviour culminating in pregnancy and STI's may also occur in South East states of Nigeria.

The indirect complications of sexual behaviour among in-school adolescents include other negative health outcomes such as increased vulnerability to partner violence (social coercion), elevated risk of HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs, STI). It can also result to other psychological manifestations such as emotional damage, depression and other risk behaviours such as suicide, high school dropout, low self-esteem and delinquency (Valerie et al., 2013). Adolescents are venerable not only to AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) but to indiscriminate display of sexual behaviour. Thus, the belief they have about sex negatively affects the morals and values of the society which pose serious threat to the future of the younger generation.

Adolescent has been defined variously by many authors. According to United Nations Family Planning Association (2007) and World Health Organization (WHO) (2009), an adolescent is a young person between 10-19 years. It is a unique stage of human development and an important time for having the foundations of good health. Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive and psycho-social growth. This affects how they feel, think make decisions, and interact with the world around them (WHO, 2009). This is also often a stage when conflict and tensions arise and adolescents become identified as problematic by parents.

Furthermore, an adolescent has been identified to have some inherent capacities. These capacities have been clearly outlined as follows; covering social, emotional, and cognitive aspects. Further, in an attempt to buttress these changes (social, emotional and cognitive changes) adolescents can be described to be drastic, which clearly depicts the radical and fundamental nature of such experience and the far-reaching consequences on the adolescent behaviour. Adolescence has been considered, almost by definition, a period of heightened stress (Spear, 2000) due to the many changes experienced concomitantly, including physical maturation, drive for independence, increased salience of social and peer interactions, and brain development (Blakemore, 2008; Casey, Getz, & Galvan, 2008a; Casey, Jones, & Hare, 2008b). Ncheta (2011) supported these views by defining an adolescent as a person behaving in an immature way and who is also at the period of adolescence or teenage. Ncheta noted that the teenage years bring about many developmental changes, not only physically but also mentally and socially. Adolescents increase their ability to think abstractly and eventually make plans and set long-term goals. The ages which are considered to be part of adolescence vary by cultural and religious beliefs and orientation and this ranges from 13 years up to 19 years, or even earlier in some cases. Deducing from the perspectives of the Ncheta (2011), it can be concluded that the central tendency in virtually all definitions of adolescent is the indication of age range from 13-19years, which thereby justifies the adoption of the term

teenage in reference to adolescents. Adolescence is usually used interchangeably with youth. These adolescents can also be called young persons and in secondary schools they are called in-school adolescents. However, in-school adolescents are adolescents in the four walls of secondary school.

There are psychosocial issues that adolescents deal with during their years according to Huebner (2000), these include: establishing an identity, establishing autonomy, (becoming an independent and self-governing person within relationships) and progression from concrete to abstract thought, establishing intimacy and becoming comfortable with one's sexuality. Based on this assertion, adolescents are at the peak of their development. How in-school adolescents are educated and exposed to sexuality will largely determine whether or not they develop a healthy sexual identity. This is because the adolescents' physical and emotional characteristics of adulthood emerge and social, intellectual and spiritual beginning of the early years are sharpened, tested and shaped for the future at this time (Berk, Rawlings & Williams 2000). Adolescents go through puberty stage which is a time in which a child's sexual and physical characteristics mature. It occurs due to hormonal changes. These changes occur according to gender differences, though the changes are not just marked by physical changes, but comprising cognitive, social/emotional and interpersonal changes as well. However, the exact age a child enters puberty depends on a number of factors, such as genes, nutrition, and gender. During puberty, endocrine glands produce hormones that cause bodily changes, and the development of secondary sex characteristics.

In females, the ovaries begin to increase production of estrogens, and this leads to the manifestation of breast, widening of pelvis and increases in the amount of body fat in hip, thigh and buttocks. Estrogen also induces growth of the uterus, proliferation of the endometrium (endometrial) and onset of menstruation. Breast development is the main sign that a girl is entering puberty. Before the first menstrual period, a girl will normally have: growth of body hair, most prominently under arm and pubic areas, greater development of high muscle behind the femur, widening of hips, increase in height, and/or whitish vaginal secretion and leg hair growth (Oriade, 2012).

In males, the testicles increase production of testosterone which directly increases the size and mass of muscles, vocal cords, and bones, deepening the voice, and changing the shape of the face and skeleton. The first sign of puberty in boys is enlargement of both testicles. Afterwards, boys according to Nicholas in Oracle, (2012) will normally experience faster growth, especially height, growth of body hair, including underarm, abdominal, chest hair, pubic hair and face (beards), increased shoulder hair, growth of the penis, scrotum (with reddening and folding of the skin) and testes, nocturnal emissions (or wet dreams) and voice changes and acne. In the context of the present study, an adolescent is a teenager going through adolescence and puberty. Furthermore, an adolescent can be viewed as a child that is going through the transitional period between puberty and adulthood (13 and 19years). However, these stages occur during adolescence stage of development.

Adolescence period is a time people are both physically mature enough to reproduce and critically analyze sexual matters cognitively. The question then arises as to whether adolescents positively or negatively analyses sexual matters cognitively. Thus, Winnie (2008) defined adolescence as a transitional stage of development between childhood and adulthood, representing the period of time during which a person experiences a variety of biological changes and encounters a number of emotional issues, thus, this is why this period is termed, the period of storm and stress. Adolescence like youth is a unique period of joy, vigour, opportunities as well as challenges as the individual begins to appreciate more vividly phenomena in his or her personal manner Ikorok in (Ozioko, 2005).

Sexuality and sexual desire usually begin to intensify along with the onset of adolescence. Thus, hormonal changes during the period of adolescence bring about a dramatic increase in sexual interest; but whether this dramatic increase in sexual interest results in sexual behaviour is dependent on the individual because among both adolescents and adults sexual interests vary significantly based on individual differences and environmental factors. Adolescence in the context of this study is a period an in-school adolescent experiences an upsurge of sexual feelings triggered off by secretions of hormones. It can also be viewed as a transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. As it is noted by Anthony (2015), sexual behaviour is a product of both biological and psychosocial forces which involves the formulation of sexual identity, management of sexual feelings, and autonomy. In line with the above assertion, Cicchetti and Rogosch (2002) opined that adolescents' developmental tasks include challenges of identity, autonomy, sexuality, academic functioning, and peer relationships. These biological changes may create challenges in forming identity, ambivalent feelings of independence, questions about conformity and confusion about values which may lead to risky behaviour. Kelly (2001) observed that 70% of these risky behaviours boil down to sexual behaviour. Coleman and Carter (2005) supported this view by stressing that a good number of adolescents are found on different cybercafés watching pornographic pictures and films on the internet while others are found in risky environments and night clubs indulging in prostitution. A key period in sexual exploration and development occurs during adolescence. During this time, individuals begin to consider which sexual behaviour is enjoyable, moral and appropriate for their age group (Levay, 2003). But then, whether sexual behaviour is enjoyable, moral or appropriate the society highly discourages adolescents from indulging in it.

On the other hand, parents have been identified to have a critical role in the task of inculcating positive (sexual) values in the adolescents. In lieu of the above assertion, Oluyemi, Yinusa, Abdullateef, Kehinde and Adejoke (2017) state that a significant relationship was found between participants' sexual behaviour and parental communication and parental monitoring, which implies that when adolescents perceived too much psychological control on the part of parents, they were more likely to have an earlier sexual debut.

However, results from researches have proved that lack of communication from parents may enhance relationship between adolescents and their peers.

Peers are persons of the same age, status or ability. It can also be viewed as a person equal to another in abilities, qualifications, age, background and social status (Ugwuoji, 2011). Peer group according to Castrogiovanni (2002) in Bassey (2020) is a small group of similar age, fairly close friends, sharing the same activities while peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes and values in order to conform to group norms. Homption in Omotere (2012) maintains that peers exert influence on adolescents' sexual behaviour. Peer influence exerts tremendous impact on the lives of in-school adolescents. This impact is more evident with respect to sexual debut and other forms of experimental behaviours resulting from peer group pressure. Note must be taken of such sexual behaviour as heterosexuality, homo-sexuality, bisexuality, autosexuality, pansexuality and masturbation, which are imbibed and practiced due to peer influence. In-school adolescents are being lured and convinced into these activities and it has far reaching consequences on them. Peer influence is also associated with cult group activities, truancy, and drunkenness, going to party and by extension results in school dropout, unintended pregnancy, and abortion with high risk of death and sexual transmitted diseases and infections. However, two of the primary theories associated with peer influence, namely: Differential Association theory (Sutherland and Cressy, 1960) and Social Learning theory (Akers, 1998) acknowledge that peer influence is partially dependent upon the intensity and frequency of peer association. This simply means that the intensity or frequency of peer association may be dependent on the environment. Ncheta (2011), corroborating this assertion, stated that adolescent peer groups are prevalent in the school environment and therefore their influences are strongly exhibited in the school among adolescents. According to Igwe, peer influence is not unidirectional; it can either have its positive effect or negative effect or both at the same time depending on the norms and values of the peer group. These norms and values could be exhibited through sexual behaviour which could come in form of watching and promoting nude and pornographic pictures, going to night clubs, learning how to practice homosexuality, pan sexuality and bisexuality among others. Consequently, all these have adverse effects on adolescents.

In the context of this study peer are persons of the same age, status or ability while peer influence is a conformity pressure, which predisposes particularly, an adolescent, to consciously or unconsciously subscribe to the prevailing norms of his friends and mates, for the purpose of belongingness and feeling of sophistication.

Cognizant of the contribution already made by existing studies in seeking to ascertain factors affecting adolescent sexual behaviour and motivated by the need to fill a gap in knowledge, this study is set to ascertain peer influence as a determinant of sexual behaviour of in-school adolescent in South East Nigeria.

2. Statement of Problem

There is substantial evidence both in literature and observations to buttress the deteriorating situation of in-school adolescents with respect to sexual behaviour. Illicit sexual behaviours among adolescents have persistently and seemingly become a norm contrary to established societal values. This is no doubt worrisome, as it is problematic.

The question then arises as to whether parents are actually playing the important role of inculcating positive (sexual) values in the adolescents, yet risky and illicit sexual behaviour among in-school adolescents continues to skyrocket on daily basis. Just like the parents, the school is equally overwhelmed by the enormity of cases of illicit sexual behaviour being reported within its confines, though, the school environment is usually submerged by peer influence among adolescents.

It is a truism that both parents and the school constitute dual factors designed by society to actuate proper upbringing of adolescents. Unfortunately, the collective engagement of these factors remains far-fetched compared to the rising incidences of risky sexual behaviour among in-school adolescents.

In Nigeria, this scenario presents the entire society with serious threats to the foundation of its morals and values, as well as the future of the younger generation of leaders. This is against the backdrop of the fact that given the prevailing sexual debut, in-school adolescents in South East Nigeria are prone to various forms of sexual behaviours which have been severally illustrated in extant research studies and other documented evidence. For example, in South East Nigeria, researchers revealed that 76 percent of the students had heterosexual intercourse and Enugu State Secondary school girls aged 13-18 years showed that 17 percent of the girls are sexually active and out of these, 35 percent have multiple sexual partners. Most of them also engage into homosexuality, bisexuality, oral and anal sex. The consequences of such sexual behaviours are far reaching as it is problematic. Available evidence among adolescents in South East Nigeria also have shown that sexual behaviours resulted in several cases of death due to abortion, high rate of school dropout, suicide, low self-esteem as well psychological trauma, emotional damage and depression, more so, in-school adolescent are exposed to such problems as HIV/AIDS, STDS, uterine cancer and more so there is rising incidence of unintended pregnancy among in-school adolescents.

Worried by the threats and challenges posed by adolescent sexual behaviour in the South East Nigeria, the question then arise as to whether peer influence is a determinant factor of sexual behaviour.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find out whether peer influence is a determinants of sexual behavior of adolescents in South Eastern, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- 1) Determine what constitute in-school adolescents peer influence
- 2) Determine sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.

- 3) Ascertain the relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.

2.2 Significance of the Study

The study has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this study hinges on Differential Association theory by Edwin Sutherland (1930) which is basically applicable to the study of crime. This theory is of the view that deviant behaviour is learned through close and frequent association with criminal and deviant behaviour pattern, norms, and values. In effect, the behaviour of an individual is influenced and shaped by other individuals they associate with. This theory is of importance to this study because it may provide a link between peer influence and sexual behaviour of in-school adolescent in South East, Nigeria.

Social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1960) is of the premise that a learner's ability to adopt desired behaviour depends on his environment, cognitive and behavioural outcome. It is of the view that people can learn behaviour observationally, through modeling, extraction of information from those observations, and making decisions about the performance of the behaviour. This is of great benefit to this study as it provides insight into how peer association can be determinants of sexual behaviour of in-school adolescent in South East Nigeria.

Practically, the findings of this study will be beneficial to the following: researchers, adolescents, parents (family), government, guidance/counsellor and society at large.

The findings of this study are considered significant to the extent that it might be a veritable reference material to future researchers with similar research interest. The material will avail them the opportunity to enhance their knowledge to the research ahead of them. It is also hoped that the finding of this will be beneficial to adolescents in secondary schools. The findings will enhance the understanding of adolescents through sensitization by the public, parents and school counsellors on the risk of engaging in risk sexual behaviour.

The parents would by this study be made to adopt and exhibit a good parenting style, which is based on responsiveness and demandingness rather than adhering to one of it. This parenting style will enhance the positive behavior of an adolescent and not exhibiting a parenting style that will push the adolescents to peer pressure. Thus, parents would be sensitized on the different parenting style through parent's forum by the school counselors and resource persons. The society at large shall in the long run benefit from the outcome of this investigation when it is effectively implemented. The society shall stand to have a decent responsible and healthy status to help in improving the growth and development of the country and also enhance a healthy posterity.

Based on the findings of this study the government may identify the needs to organize workshops, seminars, and conferences for parents and teachers to promote the teaching, learning and practice of good parenting styles. These workshops and seminars could be designed to provide in-service training for teachers on how to improve their

knowledge about adolescents and the best way to handle them and to elevate their comfort level both in the school and at home, so as to avert pressures from their peers. The outcome of this study could further sensitize the school counselor and equip him or her to provide more effective counseling and advice to the adolescent, parents and teachers on the best way to avert risk sexual behaviour of adolescent and the best parenting style to exhibit on adolescents. however, the best parenting style should be anchored on authoritarian, authoritative and permissive.

Based on the recommendation of this study the society as a whole may benefit from a long time solution in improving existing relationship and responsive parenting style. In the same way the school environment is expected to witness positive transformation which will now in turns influence the peer groups positively in South Eastern Nigeria. Findings of this study will be beneficial to the following: researchers, adolescents, parents (family), government, guidance/counsellor and society at large.

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2.3 Scope of the Study

The content scope of this study focuses on the relationship between peer influence and sexual behavior of adolescents in South East, Nigeria. This study covered different sexual behaviours of adolescents and peer influence. The geographical scope of this study was limited to in-school adolescents in South Eastern Nigeria.

3. Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are as follows.

- 1) What constitute in-school adolescents' peer influence?
- 2) What is the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents?
- 3) What is the relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents?

3.1 Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents.

4. Method

The design of the study was correlation. This design according to Nworgu (2006) seeks to establish the extent of relationship between two or more variables and also determine the direction and magnitude of such relationship. Nworgu further states that the design also permits the selection of a sample from the population and using the information generated to make inferences or generalizations to the entire population provided the sample exhibits representativeness in the study. The relationship between the independent variable (peer influence) and the dependent variable (sexual behaviour of adolescent) was established. Thus, the researcher considered the design to be suitable for the study as it sought to establish the extent of relationship between two variables (peer influence as determinant of sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.)

The study was carried out in South East, Nigeria. South East, Nigeria is made up of five states namely, Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. The South East, Nigeria, share boundaries with Benue and Cross River State on the East, Delta and Edo States on the west, Rivers and Akwa Ibom State on the south, Kogi and Benue on the North. The area of the study is the Igbo speaking area; they are also dominated by Christians. Majority of the inhabitants are farmers, civil servants, teachers, counselors and students. This area houses many secondary schools. Personal experience has also shown that most parents in South East Nigeria engage in business adventure thereby leaving the mentoring of the children at the hands of their peer group. Nigerian adolescents like others at the stage of adolescence, desperately search for identity and strive to conform to peer norms and pressure. This directly exposes them to both negative and positive

peer influence. These afore-mentioned factors motivated the researcher to conduct the study in South East, Nigeria which is the area of the study.

The population of this study comprised 137,095 in-school adolescents in senior secondary 2 students in the public (state) secondary school in South East Nigeria. The population distribution is as follows: Anambra state = 42,158, Ebonyi State = 24,520, Enugu State = 25,149, Abia = 15,987 and Imo State = 29,281. (Source: States Post Primary School Management Board, 2015/2016).

The sample for this study was 1200 senior secondary II adolescents. The sampling procedure adopted in this study was multistage sampling. First, the area was stratified into five strata: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states.

However, the researcher randomly drew three states from the strata Ebonyi, Anambra and Enugu. From each of the States randomly selected, one education zone was randomly selected, and in each education zone, two local government areas were also randomly chosen. Again, from each of the randomly selected local governments, two secondary schools were selected randomly making it a total of four secondary schools from the two local government areas. This also gave a total of four secondary schools from each of the state drew and total of twelve secondary schools from the three states randomly selected. Thus, from six secondary school selected 120 SS2 students were derived and 80 SS2 were also adopted thereby giving a total sample of 1,200 students.

The choice of this class of students is based on the fact that they are at the prime of their adolescence where sexual behaviour is often exhibited.

The instruments for data collection were two. The instruments are Peer Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) and Sexual Behaviour Questionnaire (SBQ). Peer Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) contained 14 items. The questionnaire comprised questions related to school connectedness and peer perceived engagement of one another with four-point rating scale of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD), weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. School Environment Questionnaire (SEQ) had 16 items built on a four-point rating scale that sought information from the students about the constituent of school environment. Sexual Behaviour Questionnaire (SBQ) also contained 20 items on sexual behaviours with four-point response format of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations, and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) all from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. These experts looked at the purpose and the specific objectives of the study, research questions, hypotheses, appropriateness of languages and expressions, clarity of statements as well as the relevance of the sections and items on the instruments and the ability to elicit the required information. These experts constructively scrutinized the instruments and made important corrections and useful suggestions that helped to improve the quality of the instruments.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, internal consistency reliability was conducted, thirty in-school adolescents from senior secondary school II in Makurdi in Benue State Nigeria which is outside the area of the study were selected and the instruments administered to them to enable the researcher generate data for computing the reliability index. Internal consistency reliability was calculated using the Cronbach alpha correlation. The rationale for the use of Cronbach alpha was on the basis that the items were not scored right or wrong (dichotomously) but rather were placed on a four-point rating scale of SA, A, D and SD. The analysis of the data yielded reliability coefficient indices 0.76 for peer influence questionnaire and 0.78 for sexual behaviour questionnaire.

Copies of the instruments were administered to the respondents using direct delivery and retrieval method. The distributions of the questionnaire to the sampled students were done personally by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. The use of research assistants is to facilitate the distribution and retrieval of the completed copies of questionnaire. The research assistants were instructed on the objectives of the study.

Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze research questions 1 and 3 while simple linear regression was used to analyze research questions 3 T-test was used to test hypothesis 1. In using mean, real limit of numbers were used whereby 0.00-0.49 indicates strongly disagreed, 1.00-1.49 indicates disagreed, 2.0-2.49 indicates agreed, 3.00-4.00 indicates strongly agreed.

5. Result

This study is presented in line with research questions and hypothesis that were posed and formulated to guide the study. Thereafter, the summary of the findings was presented too.

Research Question One: What constitute in-school adolescents peer influence?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the constitutes of in-school adolescents peer influence

S/N	Item Statement on Peer Influence	N=1200		
		\bar{x}	SD	Dec.
1.	I spend more time with my peer counterpart.	3.09	0.48	SA
2	I have many friends in face book and this makes me to be addicted with internet movies.	3.65	0.52	SA
3	I often do homework with friends of the opposite sex.	3.27	0.55	SA
4	My friends influence my career choice.	3.74	0.45	SA
5	My friends usually advice me to keep sexual relationship.	1.90	0.72	D
6	My friends usually dominate my opinion.	1.57	0.60	D
7	My friend influences me into taking alcohol.	3.06	0.49	SA
8	My friend makes me use dirty languages in communicating with people.	3.61	0.62	SA
9	I like to dress the way my friends dress all the time.	3.25	0.55	SA
10	I spend more time with peer than my family members.	3.72	0.50	SA

11.	My opinions are largely influenced by friends.	2.41	0.53	D
12.	I socialize more within the confines of peers than with adults.	3.24	0.57	SA
13.	I enjoy going to night club as influence and advocated by my peers.	3.44	0.64	SA
14.	I always sneak out for night club to satisfy my friend's feelings.	1.53	0.50	D
	Grand Mean	2.96	0.55	A

\bar{X} = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; SD= Strongly Agreed; A= Agreed; D= Disagreed.

The result in Table 1 shows the mean ratings of respondents on what constitute in-school adolescents peer influence. The mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on item 1-4, 7-10, 12-13 ranging between 3.06-3.74 and 0.45-0.64 respectively, revealed that respondents Strongly Agreed (SA) on the items highlighted above as those items that constitute in-school adolescents peer influence. Meanwhile, the mean ratings on item numbers 5, 6, 11, and 14, which ranges between 1.53 to 2.41 with standard deviation values which ranges from 0.50 to 0.72, revealed that, respondents Disagreed (D) on the items highlighted above as the constitutes of in-school adolescents peer influence. However, on the Grand mean score of 2.96 with standard deviation value of 0.55, respondents Agreed (A) on items in table 2 as constitutes of in-school adolescents peer influence in South East Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What is the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Sexual Behaviour of In-School Adolescents

S/N	Item Statements on Sexual Behaviour	N=1200		
		\bar{X}	SD	Dec.
1.	I am always attracted to my opposite sex during erotic discussion with him.	3.46	0.69	SA
2	I enjoy having sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol.	3.37	0.70	SA
3	I often have sexual intercourse.	3.44	0.70	SA
4	Oral sex is more enjoyable than sexual intercourse.	3.43	0.67	SA
5	Romance increases my sexual urge.	3.43	0.70	SA
6	I am always sexually active if I take sexual stimulating drug.	3.48	0.65	SA
7	I enjoy anal sex more than oral sex.	2.14	0.80	A
8	I enjoy having sex with the same sex partner more than the opposite sex.	2.16	0.77	A
9	Touching a partner's breast stimulates me.	3.48	0.64	A
10	I often use contraceptive during intercourse.	3.44	0.68	A
11.	I enjoy having sexual intercourse with more than one person at a time.	2.03	0.96	A
12.	I often reach organism through having sex with the same sex partner.	2.01	0.81	A
13.	I enjoy using sex toy to satisfy my urge.	3.45	0.67	A
14.	I get stimulated quickly when my breast are been romanced.	3.48	0.69	A
15	I like watching pornographic films because it stimulates my sexual organs.	3.49	0.68	A
16	I love to engage into multiple sexual relationships.	1.98	1.04	D
17	Having sex with more than one person is ideal for youths.	1.92	0.85	D
18	Having sex with members of the same sex is the in thing.	2.02	0.90	A

19	Adolescent enjoy masturbation.	3.36	0.89	SA
20	I hate having sexual intercourse because it irritates me.	2.02	0.90	A
	Grand Mean	2.88	0.77	A

\bar{X} = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; SA= Strongly Agreed; A= Agreed; D= Disagreed;SD= Strongly Disagreed

The result in Table 2 shows the mean ratings of respondents on what is the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. The mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on item 1-6 and 19 ranging between 3.36-3.48 and 0.65-0.89 respectively revealed that respondents strongly Agreed (SA) on the items highlighted above as the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. Meanwhile, the mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on item numbers 7-15, 18 and 20 ranging between 2.01-3.49 and 0.64-0.96 respectively, revealed that, respondents Agreed (A) on the items highlighted above as the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. However, on item numbers 16 and 17, the mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents ranges from 1.92-1.98 and 0.85-1.04 respectively. This shows that respondents Disagreed (D) on the items highlighted above as the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. Meanwhile, on the Grand mean score of 2.88 with standard deviation value of 0.77 respondents Strongly Agreed (A) on items in table 4 as the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents in South East Nigeria.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents?

Table 3: Simple regression Analysis of peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.301 ^a	0.090	.001	.1992263

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Influence

To answer this research question, the scores from the responses of the peer influence were correlated with their responses on sexual behaviour of adolescents. The result in Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficient obtained was 0.30. This means that, there exist a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents. Table 7 also shows that, the coefficient of determination (R^2) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.30 is 0.09. Furthermore, 0.1% ($.001 \times 100$) of variation in sexual behaviour is accounted for by parenting styles while 99.9% by other factors.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents.

Table 4: Special t-test Analysis of Peer Influence and Sexual Behaviour of Adolescents

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.974	.083		35.646	.000
Peer Influence	-.027	.024	-.033	-1.127	.260

a. Dependent Variable: Sexual Behaviour

The result in Table 4 confirms the fact that there existed a weak contribution of peer influence to sexual behaviour of in-school adolescence; but that Peer Influence does not predict significantly the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents, since the t-value of -1.127 with associated exact probability value of 0.26 was obtained. Although, partial correlation coefficient of peer influence has a negative relationship on sexual behaviour of in-school adolescence, and this implies that persistence increase in peer influence score would continue to have a negative effect on sexual behaviour of in-school adolescent.

6. Summary of the Findings

The findings of this study revealed the following:

1. What constitute peer influence for in-school adolescent in South East Nigeria are making friends in face book and doing homework with friends of opposite sex, among others.
2. There exists a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents, and a weak contribution of peer influence on sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between Peer Influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents.

7. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the research questions and hypothesis that guided the study. They are discussed under the following sub-headings:

- 1) Constituents of Peer influence among in-school Adolescents;
- 2) Constituents of Sexual Behaviours of In-School Adolescents;
- 3) Relationship between Peer Influence and Sexual Behaviour of Adolescent.

7.1 Constitute of Peer influence among in-school Adolescents

Based on the research question on what constitute peer influence among in-school Adolescents, this finding shows that respondents agreed on the following items as the constituents of peer influence of in-school Adolescents in South-East, spending more time with ones peer counterpart; having many friends in face book that makes me to be addicted with internet movies; often doing homework with friends of the opposite sex; my friends influencing my career choice; my friends usually dominate my opinion; my

friend influencing me into taking alcohol; my friend making me to use dirty languages in communicating with people; like dressing the way my friends dress all the time; spending more time with peer than my family members; socializing more within the confines of peers than with adults; and enjoying going to night club as influenced by my peers. The findings of this study generally show that peer counterparts influence themselves negatively and positively. However, this study is in corroboration with the previous study carried out by Potard, Courtons, and Rusch (2008) which reveals that the perception of peers is associated with a higher frequency of sexual initiation and commitment.

In line with the present research findings on what constitute peer influence among in-school adolescents. Friends spending time with peer counterpart is among them and this influences their behaviours generally. This is consistence with the findings of the previous study by Maxwell (2002) who reveals that random same sex peer predicts a teen's risk behaviour initiation. This simply means that associating with peers and counterparts influences their behaviour. The findings of the present study were of the opinion that adolescents in South East, Nigeria spend more time with peers and counterparts and have many friends in face book which may likely increase the odds of acquiring multiple partners. This confirms the opinion of Jeffery, Bingenbeimer, Elizabeth, and Clement (2015) that affiliation with antisocial peers and perceived peer norms increased the odds among younger respondents of acquiring multiple new sexual partners. From this finding one may say that associating with peer group increases the chances of influencing their behaviour as it concerns sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents in South East Nigeria. Therefore, the finding indicates that there is a relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour.

7.2 Constituents of Sexual Behaviour among In-School Adolescents

In line with research questions on what constitute sexual behaviour among in-school adolescent. Respondents from this study agreed that they are attracted by their opposite sex, enjoy having sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol, enjoy masturbation, watching pornographic films, engaging into foreplay as this increases their sexual urge, and these constitutes sexual behaviour of In-school Adolescents in South-East.

The present finding is in an accord with the result of Kasier (2003) which reveals that young people are more concerned about sex and sexual behaviour than any other sexual issues in their lives. Again, adolescents feel great pressure to have sex. The present study is consistent with that of Kasier, (2003) in the area of adolescents engaging in sexual behaviour. The present study also stated that adolescent enjoy sexual intercourse which is in agreement with the findings of the study conducted by Onyia (2000) in the area of adolescents having sexual intercourse. Hence, there are differences from the previous study in the area of male and female having unprotected sex which the present study did not indicate.

Present study indicated that adolescence enjoy sexual intercourse. The findings of the present study also concurred to the findings conducted by Beth, Anne, Rex and Kim

(2001). The result of the findings indicated that a considerable percentage are initiating into sexual activity by early or middle adolescence, with 21% of adolescent males having engaged in sexual intercourse by age 15. The present study lends credence to Petard, Courtois, Rusch (2008) who noted that perception of peers is associated with a higher frequency of sexual initiation and commitment, including oral sex. The present study indicated that adolescents enjoy oral sex, hence, the similarity.

These findings confirm that sexual behaviour is peculiar to adolescence period since the adolescents start experiencing marked changes in their sexual structure in response to puberty. The period makes the individuals conscious of their sexes, and become attracted to each other, especially opposite sex. Some of them, though not all develop desire and passion for opposite sex friendship, and these pushes them into engaging into sexual behavior

7.3 Relationship between Peer Influence and Sexual Behaviour of Adolescents

In line with the research question six, the findings indicated the existence of a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents, and a weak contribution of peer influence on sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. There is no statistically significant relationship between Peer Influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents. Findings of the current study supported the findings from the previous study conducted by Jeffrey, Bingenbeimer, Elizabeth, and clement (2015), which revealed that affiliation with antisocial peers and perceived peer norms favoring sex increased the odds of transition to first sex. Having more friends increased the odds among younger respondents of acquiring multiple new sexual partners. Among males, perceived peer norms favoring sex increased the odds of acquiring multiple partners. There is a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents. There is however no statistically significant relationship between Peer Influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents. Both studies indicated peer influence as one of the variables that influence sexual behaviour of adolescent. Presently, the findings from this study supported the previous study conducted by Renee, Sieving, Marla, Eisenberg, Sandra and Carol, (2006). The findings indicated that adolescents with higher proportions of sexually experienced close friends are more likely to initiate sexual intercourse than others.

This means that there exists a direct relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour. This study establishes with the previous study the fact that peers influence the sexual life of the adolescents though not significantly owing to the fact that most of the adolescents can be influenced by other variables like computer-mediated communication, unhealthy exposure and spiritual initiation among others.

From the foregoing discussions based on the results of the study, it was discovered that authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are the parenting styles of in-school adolescents in South East Nigeria. Based on the purpose of the study which is to find out whether parenting styles, peer influence and school environment are determinants of sexual behaviour of adolescents in South East Nigeria. The findings

statistically stated that there was no significant relationship between the variables, though there is existence of a direct positive relationship between parenting styles and sexual behaviour of adolescents, parenting styles and sexual behaviour of adolescents as well as school environment and sexual behaviour of adolescents.

7.4 Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have tremendous implications for the researchers, adolescents, parents (family), government, guidance/counsellor and society at large. These implications are discussed as follows:

- 1) Since, the constituents of Peer influences of In-school adolescents were determined; this therefore suggested that, the time In-school adolescents spend with peer should be reduced. The number of friends that in-school adolescents have on Facebook could be reduced. In-school adolescents should abstain from keeping sexual relationship and should desist from attending night club. Adolescents should stop watching pornographic films.
- 2) Since, peer influence has a direct positive relationship to sexual behaviour; adolescents should be educated and counseled on sexual education so that they will not exert negative peer influence among themselves as it concerns sexual behaviour. However, the time In-school adolescents spend with peer and friends should be reduced.

8. Conclusion

The main purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents in South Eastern zone of Nigeria. To guide the study, three research questions were posed, and one hypothesis were equally formulated and tested at 5% probability level. A correlational survey research design was adopted for this study. This study was carried out in Public (state) owned secondary schools in in South East Nigeria, which consists of Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Abia, and Imo State. The sampled size for this study consists of 1200 senior secondary II in-school adolescents.

This sample was drawn using multistage sampling technique. First, the area was stratified into five strata: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states respectively. However, the researcher randomly selected three states from the strata Ebonyi, Anambra and Enugu. From each of the States randomly selected, one education zone was randomly selected, and in each education zone, two local government areas were also randomly selected. Again, from each of the randomly selected local governments, two secondary schools were selected randomly making it a total of four secondary schools from the two local governments. This gave a total of four secondary schools from each of the state selected and total of twelve secondary school from the three states randomly selected. Thus, from each of the selected schools hundred SS2 were selected thereby giving a total sample of 1, 200 students.

The instruments for data collection were two. The instruments are Peer Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) and Sexual Behaviour Questionnaire (SBQ). The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations, and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) all from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. To determine the reliability of the instrument, internal consistency reliability was conducted using 30 in-school adolescents from senior secondary school II in Makurdi in Benue State Nigeria. Internal consistency reliability was calculated using the Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient. The analysis of the data yielded reliability coefficient indices 0.76 and 0.78 for the two instruments respectively. Copies of the instruments were administered to the respondents using direct delivery and retrieval method. The distribution of the questionnaire to the sampled students was done personally by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to analyze research question 1 and 2 while Person Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to answer the research question 3, Regression analyses were used to test hypotheses 1.

Findings revealed that the constituents of peer pressure and sexual behaviours were established. However, there existed a direct positive relationship between peer influence and sexual behaviour of adolescents but no statistically significance existed between peer influence and sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.

Inline with the findings of the study, the educational implications of the findings were highlighted, and the recommendations were equally made among others that: Parents should improve on their parenting style may be by openly criticizing their children when their behaviour does not meet their expectation always. Also, Parents should be ready to listen and consider their children opinion when plans are made for the family. The time In-school adolescents spend with peer and friends on Facebook should be reduced. In-school adolescents should abstain from keeping sexual relationship and should desist from attending night club. Adolescents should stop watching pornographic films. Government should ensure that school environment becomes friendly. The schools should be operated on a very strict rules and regulations. Schools administration should work with guidance and counseling unit and organize seminars and workshop on how to sensitize and curtail sexual behavior of in-school adolescents.

8.1 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made with a view to improving the sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents.

- 1) Teachers and counselors should give the in-school adolescents proper and adequate sexuality education to help them avoid risky sexual behaviour.
- 2) More school counselors should be employed and retrained through in-service training programmes, capacity building workshops and refresher courses on sexual behaviour counseling.

- 3) The school authority should print and provide school guidance counselors with adequate materials (furniture for administrative and counseling conveniences; file cabinet for record keeping, notice board for information dissemination; log book; advertisement forms to enlighten students on service in counseling centre, files; counseling records; registration form; request form for counseling interview, case report sheet, consultation form, and appointment slip.) to carry out their functions effectively.
- 4) Religious leaders and community leaders should be co-opted into committee that will enlighten the in-school adolescence on the disadvantages of engaging in sexual behaviour.
- 5) Proper and adequate Sexuality education should be incorporated into secondary school curriculum; this will go a long way in enhancing the scope of in-school adolescents on the best way to avert immorality and sexual behaviour.
- 6) Parents should also be educated through seminars, and workshop on the best way to train the in-school adolescents knowing full well their challenges.
- 7) Government should ensure that school environment becomes friendly. The schools should be operated on a very strict rules and regulations.
- 8) Researchers should develop e-counseling model or cyber-counseling for the modification of risky sexual behaviour among adolescents. This model might be the quickest and most effective method of modifying sexual behaviour arising from engagement in internet communication. This can occur between a counselor and in-school adolescent through email, video conferencing, online chat, messaging, or internet phone.

Conflict of Interest Statement

We declare no conflict of interest whatsoever.

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