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Effects of Illicit Sex among Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of illicit Sex among Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated three (3) objectives of the study, research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study. The study made use of descriptive survey design. The population of the consists of 13,450 students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The sample size of the study comprised of three hundred and twenty (320) SSI and SSII students selected from the population. From the 16 public senior secondary schools in the study area, eight (8) schools were randomly selected for the study and from each school, simple random sampling was used to select forty (40) students that participated in the study. The instrument used for the collection of data was a self- designed questionnaire titled: “Effects of Illicit Sex among Senior Secondary School Students Questionnaire .Based on the analysis, the findings of the study revealed that peer group, enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State, self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that: school counsellors and parents should ensure that students should be given functional sex education and parents and teachers should sensitize the students on the negative effects of engaging in unlawful sexual activities for material possessions.

Keywords: Illicit Sex, Peer Group, Self Efficacy, Premarital Sexual

INTRODUCTION

In the last three decades, a substantial increase has been observed in the proportion of students who engaged in sexual activity while at school (Smith, 2017). Students are known to be an adventurous group, and often engage in risky behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and early unprotected sexual activity (Linbee, Valencia, & Cromer, 2020). Practices such as homosexuality, lesbianism, and sexual orgies are indulged in just for the reason of experimentation and peer influences, owing to a wealth of uncensored information they are exposed to, through an intensifying wave of westernization, the Internet, and electronic media. Perhaps this explains why adolescence has also been described as a time of ‘storm and stress’ (Hall, 2014). In his review, Dahl (2014) indicated that the dramatic increase in morbidity and mortality during this period of life is not attributable to illness or infection, but rather to ‘difficulties in the control of behavior and emotion’.

Studies reveal that students’ sexual relationship is on increase and common in most of Africa schools. The trend is gradually changing and the incidence of student-students’ or youths’ engaging in sexual relationship is high and may constitute problems (Ngalinda, 2018) including social, health and academic.

Students' sexual activity has resulted into increased cases of unplanned pregnancies, and eventually school dropouts. However, studies in Nigeria have not seriously investigated the effects of sexual relationship on students. Most of previous studies in Tanzania have invested in studying factors affecting students in general. Factors studied include such as teachers' incompetence, student's low motivation, teachers' low morale, the level of sexual activity of students, etc. summarized in Timothy (2020). Evidences from other countries may help to understand the existing relationship between students' sexual relationship and academic performance. In the United States, a number of studies have shown that, teenagers who abstain from sex are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college than their sexually active peers (Sabia & Rees, 2019). Although American context is not comparable to Nigeria due to great differences of the two countries in socio-economic, educational and technological development, still this study lays a good foundation to understanding sexual behaviors and academic performance of students in different contexts including Nigeria.

Adolescence is marked by a period of self-discovery. It is characterized by transitions in emotional, social and cognitive development. In high school, students are exposed to social opportunities, and are able to exercise more freedom compared to their experiences during their elementary or middle school years (Eccles, Lord, & Roeser, 2016). This sense of independence is important for students' personal growth and identity. The transition to high school also indicates a corresponding heightened emphasis on intrinsic motivation and relative ability. A substantial concern for high school students can be balancing academic achievement with peer acceptance and approval. Eccles and colleagues (2016) demonstrated that as students negotiate these internal and external challenges, they begin to establish a more coherent sense of personal identity and self-concept. The challenges of this period can help some grow and forge a positive sense of self-esteem. For some, however, the developmental challenges can render them more vulnerable to poor self-esteem, and more susceptible to involvement in risk taking and problem behaviors. Studies have found that poor academic self-concept can lead to disengagement from school, and a downward spiral over time toward poor grades, and behavioral transgression (Honken & Ralston, 2013).

Illicit or unlawful sexual activities among school 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.

LITERATURE 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 Illicit or Unlawful Sexual Activities

Illicit or unlawful sexual activities are those sexual relationships between opposite sex who are not yet married. According to Onyebuchukwu (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 Illicit or 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, 2020). According to Ryan (2019), 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, 2019). 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 (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 (2019) 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 Illicit or Unlawful Sexual Activities

Self efficacy is one of the strong predictor of unlawful sexual activities among students. According to Hughes (2021), 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 (2018), 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 (2019) 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 (2021) found that self-efficacy was a strong predictor to students' intention to have sexual partner in schools.

Illicit or unlawful sexual activities could be detrimental to students' health and well-being. Ryan (2019) noted that students who engaged in appropriate sexual behavior are often dispose 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 (2018) stated that sexual activeness and risky sexual behavior 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, Hughes (2021) 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. Menon 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 perceive their friends to be sexually active are more likely to be sexually active themselves.

According to Chilisa (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 confident 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 sexually practices.

Premarital sexual behavior among students appears to be a reality that cannot be ignored. Several studies reveal that students' premarital sexual activities are on the increase and common in most African schools. Premarital sexual behavior is a sexual activities practiced by persons who are unmarried and it has been considered taboo in some cultures and sin in numerous religion (Stephen & Stephen, 2016). Different studies identified factors influencing premarital sexual behaviour. These factors include peer pressure, family background, socio-economic status, religiosity, age, exposure to pornographic materials/mass media, and internet exposure and substance abuse among others.

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

Evidence from other countries may help to understand the existing relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and academic performance. In the United States, a number of studies have shown that students who abstain from sex are more likely to graduate from high school (secondary school) and attend college than their sexually active peers (Adeola, 2014). Nevertheless this study lays

a good foundation to understanding illicit sex among secondary school students in Rivers State. Good academic performance is imperative in learning school materials. However, this has not been the case in Nigeria Rivers State in particular. The quality of educations in Nigeria and Port Harcourt Metropolis has been deteriorated over time. Port Harcourt Metropolis is experiencing students' poor academic performance signaled by failures of secondary school leavers, which sparked concern of the public especially parents and other educational stakeholders.

This study, however does not aim at explaining failure in Port Harcourt Metropolis rather ascertaining the existence and impact of students' premarital sexual behaviour on their academic performance. Studies reveal that there is relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and their academic performance (Sabia & Rees, 2019). It was found that high school students who were dating exhibited consistently and significantly lower levels of academic achievement and academic motivation. Another study on teenage sexual abstinence and academic achievement revealed that, teens who abstained from sex during high school years were substantially less likely to be expelled from school by 60%, 50% less likely to drop out of high school and almost twice as likely to graduate from college. In support of this findings, the following arguments were offered: (1) when greater energy and interest were invested in sexual activity the drive for academic performance are likely to diminish; (2) sexually active students may become preoccupied with the present sexual activity, then long term academic goals may have diminished importance; and (3) students premarital sexual behaviours are inherently short term and unstable therefore, the collapse of intimacy relationships is likely to result in emotional torment and depression, which in turn, affect individual's academic performance (Timothy, 2020).

It is noted that unplanned or premarital pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDs, poor academic performance are typical problems students engaging in sexual activity are likely to encounter. However, this study emphasized on the relationship between premarital sexual behaviour and academic performance. Good academic performance is a core achievement desired by an educational institution that aims at achieving quality education. It should be noted further that, students are in schools for academic achievement. It is during this time when teenage students pass through a critical time of their life development including academic and eventually career choices. On the other hand, during the same time most adolescent students start experimenting with their sexual fantasies, which may compromise with their academic performance. (Kelly, 2021).

Since there is no study in Nigeria and in Port Harcourt Metropolis in particular which intensively explored or explained the relationship between students' premarital sexual behaviour and its influence on academic performance, this study therefore attempts to highlight the influence/or impact of premarital sexual behaviour on the academic performance of secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. One of the socio-personal variables which may influence students' tendency to involvement in unlawful and premarital 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 (2020) 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.

Student is characterized by emotional, social and physical transformations that can expose young people to emotional and health vulnerabilities. In this period of development, young people begin to engage in risky behaviors, such as alcohol/drug use and unsafe sex. In Brazil, the onset of alcohol use occurs on average during student age, and approximately 35% of high school students tend to engage in binge drinking (defined as drinking five or more doses of alcohol on one occasion). This drinking behavior pattern is often carried out by these teenagers at parties and nightclubs, despite the sale of alcoholic beverages and entry into nightlife environments being prohibited to students younger than 18 years of age in this country.

Particularly in the nightlife environment, youth may associate alcohol consumption with sexual practices, believing that alcohol may act as a facilitator for sexual encounters. After drinking, young individuals feel more confident to attempt a sexual approach. Moreover, there is a belief that alcohol consumption can help improve sexual performance and increase sexual pleasure. However, alcohol and other psychotropic drugs appear to be associated with unsafe sex. English young adults who drank and used illegal drugs had more sexual partners and had engaged in more episodes of unsafe sex compared with the abstainers from alcohol or drugs (Kelly, 2021). In Africa, binge drinking episodes were causally associated with unsafe sex and sexual violence among adults.

Alcohol use reduces decision-making ability and decreases the chances of rejection of an unwanted sexual act, leading to possible pregnancy, STD/HIV transmission and multiple sexual partners. Some authors have emphasized the “Alcohol Myopia Theory” to explain risk behaviors associated with the pharmacological effects of alcohol. This theory suggests that when a person consumes alcohol, his cognitive abilities to process and discriminate between stimuli or cues to behavior begin to decrease. This cognitive impairment causes the person to focus on the most important cues and ignore others, making them “myopic”. The same has been shown for other psychotropic drugs that impair cognition.

In Latin America, approximately 1.4 million people are infected with HIV; more than half of the cases are in Brazil and due to sexual intercourse. Among youth (between 13 and 19 years old), the number of AIDS cases is higher among females than males in Brazil, which is different from the gender ratio in other age groups. Governmental data suggest that despite having high knowledge about STD/HIV, youth are the only age group that shows a trend toward increased HIV infection. Among girls, almost the totality of infections were due to heterosexual intercourse. Because most current studies were derived from data collected among adults and young adults in developed countries, there is an interest in studying the level of exposure to sexually transmitted diseases in Student and its association with patterns of alcohol/other drug use in a middle-income country, such as Brazil.

Statement of the Problem

There appears to be a consensus among Nigerian researchers and observers that many traditional values are changing rapidly and for the worse (Adeola, 2021; Ezeh, 2021; Arumala, 2015). One area of life in which the decline of traditional values is obvious is in the area of sexuality. One major change has been the acceptance of pre-marital sex in a loving relationship. Osisioma (2018) lamented that in Nigeria, culture no longer has a grip on the youth as our society seems to be plagued with decayed moral codes and values and so the sense of right and wrong is eroded. This seems to affect the youth, adolescent's inclusive, more than any other group as this is manifested in the acceptance of sex before marriage, homosexual behavior, lesbianism, abortion, drug addiction and indecent dressing. Apart from the blame apportioned to parents for their negligence as earlier mentioned, some people are of the opinion that students are naturally open to the normal sex drive while this drive is incensed by the impact of permissive Western culture transmitted through the sexual stimuli conveyed by the mass media. Denga (2013) pointed out that sexually explicit movies expose young people to adult issues at an “impressionable age.” Others opine that the use of pornographic materials as well as knowledge and use of contraceptives, especially the condom that has been excessively advertised, has contributed immensely to the involvement of students in sexual practices.

The researcher discovered that sometimes the students' performances are on the negative as a result of premarital sexual relationships either among the students or with those outside the school. And these have gone a long way to hamper the educational development of the Nigerian youths in general and Kuje and its environs in particular.

Culturally, sex is supposed to be preserved till marriage, but it has been observed that premarital sexual behaviour has remained persistent and prevalence in this contemporary time due to various contributing factors and has had negative influences on the life of the students involved. Studies as affirmed that student are unlikely to complete secondary school education due to their involvement in premarital sexual behaviour. The non-completion of a secondary school education limits the life earning potentials among

the teenage population which could perpetuate the cycle of impoverishing among them. Based on this, the study is therefore concerned with the illicit sex among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effects of illicit sex among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The following specified objectives guided the study:

1. To identify the extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. To examine the extent self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. To examine the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide the researcher and help to achieve the specified objectives:

1. To what extent does peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does premarital illicit sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

The researcher formulated the following hypothesis that guided the study

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This design was used because it is best suited for data collection, organization, presentation and analysis for the purpose of describing the occurrence of an event or phenomenon within a specified group. All public senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor local government area were used for the population of the study, with a population size of 13,450 students. The sample size of the study comprised of three hundred and twenty (320) SSI and SSII students selected from the population. From the 16 public senior secondary schools in the study area, eight (8) schools were randomly selected for the study and from each school, simple random sampling was used to select forty (40) students that participated in the study. The instrument used for the collection of data was a self- designed questionnaire titled: "Illicit Sex among Senior Secondary School Students Questionnaire (ISSSQ) which was validated by three experts in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through test-retest method within two weeks interval and the scores were correlated using Pearsons Product Moment correlation to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.75. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool a 0.05 level of significant.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the extent peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary I (SSI) n ₁ = 150			Students of Senior Secondary II (SS II) n ₂ = 170		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
		1	Peer group encourages a person to change his/her attitude towards illicit sex.	3.12	1.01	HE	3.08
2	People of age brackets encourage or urge others to involve in unlawful sexual relations.	3.04	0.81	HE	3.11	1.04	HE
3	Some peer groups see others as models thereby following them to involve in illicit or unlawful sexual relationships.	2.96	0.73	HE	3.10	0.91	HE
4	Peer groups whose friends are sexually active are more likely to be sexually active in illicit drugs.	3.25	0.67	HE	3.17	0.73	HE
5	Peer groups has negative influence on the unlawful sexual relationships in the society.	2.89	1.12	HE	2.90	0.82	HE
Grand Mean/ SD		3.05	0.87		3.07	0.89	

Table 1 presents that items 1 to 5 have means of 3.12, 3.04, 2.96, 3.25, 2.89 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.67 to 1.12; and means of 3.08, 3.11, 3.10, 3.17, 2.90 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.73 to 1.04 which indicate “High Extent” on how peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. Also, the grand means for SS1 and SS2 students are 3.05 and 3.07 respectively, further confirming a “High Extent” on how peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. Thus, it is found that peer group enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a “High Extent”.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the extent self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary I (SSI) n ₁ = 150			Students of Senior Secondary II (SS II) n ₂ = 170		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
		6	Some students believe in their capability to carryout goal-related behaviour which lead them to illicit sexual relationship.	3.17	0.93	HE	3.19
7	Some students have confidence and boldness in having illicit or unlwaful sexual relationship.	3.23	1.13	HE	3.18	1.08	HE
8	The organized and consistent way an	3.11	0.88	HE	3.10	0.91	HE

	individual thinks which make them to be involve in illicit sexual relationship.						
9	Self efficacy is the set of feelings and cognition about oneself which makes them to be involved in sexual relationship.	3.27	0.79	HE	3.20	0.73	HE
10	Self efficacy makes students to be involved in illicit or unlawful sexual relationship.	2.98	1.07	HE	2.94	0.82	HE
Grand Mean/ SD		3.15	0.96		3.12	0.87	

The information in table 2 shows that items 6 to 10 have means of 3.17, 3.23, 3.11, 3.27, 2.98 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.79 to 1.13; and means of 3.19, 3.18, 3.10, 3.20, 2.94 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.73 to 1.08 indicating a “High Extent” on how self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The grand means for SS1 and SS2 students are, respectively, 3.15 and 3.12, which is a confirmation of high extent on how self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The above results imply that self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a “High Extent”.

Research Question 3: *To what extent does premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary I (SSI) n ₁ = 150			Students of Senior Secondary II (SS II) n ₂ = 170		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
11	Premarital sexual behaviour among the students appears to be a reality that cannot be ignored.	3.15	1.11	HE	3.11	0.79	HE
12	Premarital sexual behaviour is a sexual activity practiced by persons who are unmarried.	3.09	1.03	HE	3.01	1.08	HE
13	Premarital sexual relationship is an illicit sexual relation among the students.	3.22	0.94	HE	3.18	0.91	HE
14	Premarital sexual relationship leads to unwanted pregnancy in the society.	3.07	0.69	HE	3.03	0.74	HE
15	Premarital sexual relationship is an illicit and unlawful sexual relationship.	3.13	0.83	HE	3.09	0.82	HE
Grand Mean/ Standard Deviation		3.13	0.92		3.10	0.87	

Table 3 presents that items 11 to 15 have means of 3.15, 3.09, 3.22, 3.07, 3.13 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.69 to 1.11; and means of 3.11, 3.01, 3.18, 3.03, 3.09 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.74 to 1.08 which indicate “High Extent” on how premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. Also, the grand means for SS1 and SS2 students are 3.13 and 3.10 respectively, further confirming a “High Extent” on how premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. Thus, it is found that premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a “High Extent”.

Test of Hypotheses

In this section the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 was used for the test of hypotheses. The t-test (rather than the z-test) statistic was employed in the analysis despite the large sample size. This was so for three major reasons: 1. When the sample is sufficiently large, the t-value and the z-value coincide. 2. The SPSS does not contain the z-test as both z-test and t-test are treated as the same for sufficiently large samples. 3. Very importantly, the t-value is computed when the population mean and standard deviation are not known, but for z-value computation, the population mean and standard deviation must be known.

The symbols used here were as specified below:

- F = Ratio of homogeneity between group variance to within group variance (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances)
- t = Value of t-statistic obtained from the SPSS analysis
- df = Degrees of freedom
- p-value = Sig. (2-tailed) obtained from the SPSS analysis to be compared with the α -value
- α -value = Level of significance (0.050) fixed by Rivers State University

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	Df	p-value	α -value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	70.709	.110	-2.577	798	.072	.050	H ₀ Not Rejected
Equal variances not assumed			-2.577	728.206	.072	.050	

Table 4 presents that equal variances assumed has $t = -2.577$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.072$. This implies that the null hypothesis that “significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = -2.577$, 2-tailed $p = 0.072 > \alpha = 0.05$. Thus, SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are in accordance that peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	Df	p-value	α -value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	1.085	.298	4.251	798	.107	.050	H ₀ Not Rejected
Equal variances not assumed			4.251	796.709	.107	.050	

The information in table 5 shows that equal variances assumed has $t = 4.251$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.107$. Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = 4.251$, 2-tailed $p = 0.107 > \alpha = 0.05$. This implies that SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are in agreement that self

efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	Df	p-value	α-value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	15.599	.123	11.985	798	.097	.050	H ₀ Not Rejected
Equal variances not assumed			11.985	781.568	.097	.050	

Table 6 presents that equal variances assumed has $t = 11.985$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.097$. Therefore the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = 11.985$, 2-tailed $p = 0.097 > \alpha = 0.05$. Thus, SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State agree that premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State to a high extent.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

The finding of the study in research question one: To what extent does peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State revealed that peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The corresponding hypotheses 1 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent peer group enhance sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. This study is in line with Ryan (2019) who asserts that peer group encourages a person to change his/her attitude towards illicit sex and that people of age brackets encourage or urge others to involve in unlawful sexual relations. The study still showed that the responsiveness agreed on the view that some peer groups see others as models thereby following them to involve in illicit or unlawful sexual relationships. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that peer groups whose friends are sexually active are more likely to be sexually active in illicit sex. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted the fact that peer groups has negative influence on the unlawful sexual relationships in the society.

The extent self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

The findings of the study in research question two: To what extent does self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State showed that self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The corresponding hypotheses 2 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent self efficacy enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. This findings of the study is in collaboration with Hall (2014) who observed that the respondents accepted the point that some students believe in their capability to carryout goal-related behaviour which lead them to illicit sexual relationship. The respondents also accepted the view that parents some students have confidence and boldness in having illicit or unlfawful sexual relationship. It is still noticed from the analysis that the respondents agreed that the organized and consistent way an individual thinks which make them to be involve in illicit sexual relationship. The analysis also revealed that the respondents accepted the fact that self efficacy is the set of feelings and

cognition about oneself which makes them to be involved in sexual relationship. The respondents also accepted the view that self efficacy makes students to be involved in illicit or unlawful sexual relationship.

The extent premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

The finding of the study in research question three: To what extent does premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State indicated that premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The corresponding hypotheses 3 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the SSI and SSII students on the extent premarital sexual relationship enhances sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. This study is in line with Okonkwo (2019) who asserts that premarital sexual behaviour among the students appears to be a reality that cannot be ignored and that premarital sexual behaviour is a sexual activity practiced by persons who are unmarried. The study still showed that the respondents agreed on the view that premarital sexual relationship is an illicit sexual relation among the students. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that premarital sexual relationship leads to unwanted pregnancy in the society. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted the fact that premarital sexual relationship is an illicit and unlawful sexual relationship.

CONCLUSION

The illicit sex among senior secondary school students in Rivers State cannot be over emphasised. This study concludes that peer group, enhance illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State, self efficacy enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State and premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The study also deduced that illicit of unlawful sexual activities are those sexual relationships between opposite sex who are not yet married and that 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1 School counsellors and parents should ensure that students should be given functional sex education so as to help them hold a positive view of themselves on issues about sex
- 2 Parents and teachers should sensitize the students on the negative effects of engaging in unlawful sexual activities for material possessions
- 3 Government, through the non governmental organization should organize seminar or orientation on the danger of premarital sexual relationship enhances illicit sexual relationship among senior secondary school students in Rivers State

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