DATING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS AMONG BABCOCK UNIVERSITY'S UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN OGUN STATE

Nwosu Jonathan C. (Ph.D)

Babcock University Ilishan, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT: *This study examined the predictive power of dating on undergraduates' academic performance at Babcock University, Ilishan-remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was employed while two hundred and eighty-nine participants were selected through the multi-stage stratified random sampling technique. A self-developed questionnaire tagged Undergraduates' Dating Scale (UDS) was used for data collection, while Students' academic performance was measured the Students' CGPA. The data collected was analyzed using statistical analysis of simple percentage, correlation coefficient, Z-test, t-test, and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed a significant difference do exist between male and female undergraduates' dating behaviour (t-cal = 11.309 > t-crit. = 1.96, < 0.05); and a statistical difference do exist between the academic performance of those involved in dating and those who do not (z-cal = 3.543 > z-crit. = 1.96, < 0.05). The study further revealed a positive significant relationship between undergraduates' dating behaviour and academic performance (r = .671; p>.05); while dating behaviour accounted for 27.1% of the variability in the undergraduates' academic achievement (R = .538; R^2 = .289; Adj. R^2 = .271; $F_{(1,287)}$ = 21.501; p <.05). Based on the findings, it was therefore recommended that among other things, sexual and reproductive health education is necessary, which should be channeled from different angles of human interactional opportunities: home, school, play grounds, churches, etc.*

KEYWORDS: Dating Behaviour, Academic Performance, Undergraduates, Ogun State.

INTRODUCTION

Dating behaviour during adolescence initiate a learning process that lays the foundation for future adult romantic relationships. Studies reveal that students' sexual relationship is on increase and common in most of Africa schools (Akindele-Oscar & Ayodele, 2004; Ayodele, 2014; Jones &Espey, 2008; Ogunsanya, 2010). It has been observed that dating behaviour among Nigerian youths constitute a very high problem in their psycho-social development including health and academic (Akindele-Oscar, 2014; Ayodele, 2014). Students' dating activity has resulted into increased cases of unplanned pregnancies, poor academic performance, and eventually school dropouts (Mlyakado, 2013).

Globally today, early sexual debut and activities have been seen as an issue influencing adolescents' self-perception, social status, and future health behaviour. researchers like Akindele-oscar and Ayodele (2004), Ogunsanya (2007) affirmed that " Just like the western world, Nigerian youths are becoming predominantly pre-marital in their sexual activities." This on the other hand must have made very great number of the youths to be sexually active, and engaging in unprotected sex regardless their background educationally, socially, and location of living either in urban or rural area (Olusakin, 2007; Ayodele & Akindele-oscar, 2014). It has

been observed also that "premarital activities of today's youth have given liberty to close intimacy of reckless romantic explorations during dating" (Iyang, 2007; Akinawo & Owonikin, 2007).

Till date, most studies that have investigated adolescents' exploration and behaviour failed to examine if the dating behaviour of the adolescents will have any influence on their academic success especially their performance in school work. Though, most studies previously done in Nigeria have studied factors militating against students' academic performance. Factors studied include teachers' incompetence, student's low motivation, teachers' low morale, the level of dating behaviour of students, and so on. 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, 2009). It is believed that this study will lay a good foundation to the understanding of undergraduates' dating behaviours in relation to their academic performance especially in Nigeria with diverse socio-cultural background.

The issue of dating behaviour is no more something to toy with in academics but something to deal with. This is because dating behaviour is now a common phenomenon among students particularly at the college and university levels, which has been identified as of the major factors militating against academic success or academic achievement. It is worthy to note that the lives of university students are characterized by frequent deadlines given by lecturers and administrators to carry out various responsibilities. This according to Popoola (2005) include "registration for courses, completion of course forms and submission of class assignments or term papers."

Dating relationship is probably the single most common distractor in academic endeavour of many students. Timothy (2010) asserts that good academic performance is imperative in learning school materials. However, this has not been the case in Nigeria, as the quality of education has deteriorated overtime (Akinlana, 2012, Nwosu, 2012).

Students' academic performance characterised by mass failures in core subjects among secondary school leavers has sparked serious concern to the whole public especially parents, teachers and government. This students' poor academic performance is not only limited to secondary school but across all tiers of education. However, this study does not intend to explain reasons for the mass failures but intend to explain the predictive power of dating behaviour on students' school success especially their academic performance.

A study Sabia and Rees (2009) established a relationship between students' academic performance and sexual relationship; while Quatman, *et al.* (2001) found that high school students in sexual relationship consistently and significantly exhibited poor academic motivation level, which resulted in low academic achievement. Study on teenage sexual abstinence and academic achievement in high school by Rector and Johnson (2005) showed that 60% of students who consistently abstained from sex are likely to be academically focused, 50% likely to remain in school, and have high tendency to graduate from college.

Rector and Johnson (2005) in support of the previous findings argued that: (1) when greater energy and interest were invested in sexual activity the zeal for academic success will likely dropped; (2) academic goals may likely dropped by teens who are sexually active and become sexually preoccupied; (3) sexual relationships of teens are naturally short-termed and unhinged,

and when there is a breakdown in intimate relationship, the outcome has always been depression and emotional turmoil; which adversely affect individual's academic performance.

In the light of this, the present study is designed to examine the prediction of undergraduate dating behaviour on their academic performance in Babcock University.

Research Hypotheses

Four hypotheses were formulated to drive the objectives of this study,

1. Male and female undergraduate students will not significantly differ in their dating behaviour.

2. There is no significant academic performance difference between the undergraduates that involved in dating and those who do not.

3. There is no significant positive relationship between undergraduates' dating behaviour and academic performance.

4. Undergraduates' dating behaviour will not significantly predict their academic achievement.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The descriptive research design was used to carry out this research work. The design is suitable for the study as it facilitated the description of situation as it relate to the variables of the study.

Population: The target population for the study consisted of all undergraduate students offering at Babcock University.

Sample and Sampling procedure: The sample for the study was undergraduate students randomly selected from 5 out of 9 schools (faculties) at Babcock University, Ilishan-remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. The sample was made up of 300 students who have already spent more than 2 semesters in the university. Stratified sampling technique was used to group students into their respective levels (200 level to 400 level) in each school. Furthermore, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 students from 200L to 400L making 60 participants from each school and 300 in all.

Instrumentation: Undergraduates' Dating Scale (UDS) was a researcher-developed questionnaire. It was a 30-item questionnaire of 5 likert type which ranges from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). It has a reliability coefficient (alpha) of 0.81. Also, the students' academic performance was measured through the students' cumulative grade point average (CGPA).

Analysis: Data collected from this study was subjected to statistical analysis of simple percentage, correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis significant of 5% error margin (0.05 alpha level). It should be noted, however, that the CGPA of the selected students were converted to standard scores (Z-scores). The Z-scores were further converted to T-scores to remove the negative values and decimal fractions that showed up.

RESULTS

Preliminary analyses were conducted on data using the descriptive statistics. It should be noted however that out of the three hundred (300) questionnaires administered only two hundred and eighty-nine (289) were adequately filled and used in the analysis. Thus, 96.3% questionnaire retrieval success was attained.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents that participated in this study revealed that out of the two hundred and eighty-nine (289) participants in the sample, 163 (56.4%) were females, while 126 (43.6%) were males. Majority (191; 66.1%) of students were within the age bracket of 21 and 25years; 245 (84.8%) were in one relationship or the other; out of the 245 in relationship, majority (73.3%) were in a relationship more than a year and have had had sexual intercourse.

Out of this sampled population, it was observed that 38.7% agreed there was an improvement on their CGPA from the previous level/semester; while the remaining 61.3% did not.

Table 1: T-test table showing gender difference in undergraduates' dating behaviour

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t-cal	t-table	Remark
Male	126	39.09	13.43	287	11.309	1.96	Significant
Female	163	43.27	10.86				

From Table 1, it can be observed that the obtained value of t = 11.309 is greater than critical value of 1.96 at 287 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This implies that a difference do exist between male and female undergraduates' dating behaviour. It could be deduced that dating relationships during adolescence initiate a learning process that lays the foundation for future adult romantic relationships. Therefore, this submission supports the findings of Akindele-Oscar and Ayodele (2014), Ayodele (2014), Jones and Espey (2008),and, Ogunsanya (2010) in their various study which reveal that the consistent increase in teens' sexual relationship in schools is constituting social, health and academic problems. The outcome of this study is also in line with that of Lewis et al., (2007); Morr and Mongeau (2004)indicated that an individual's expectations vary greatly between emerging adult men and women. Male and female have reported different responses regarding sexual initiation, sexuality within relationships, and hooking up behaviours in college with male reporting expectations around earlier sexual intercourse in relationships and hook up behaviours than female (Morr & Mongeau, 2004; Stinson, 2010).

Table 2: Z-test comparison of the academic performance of those students involved in dating and those who do not

Variable	N	Mean (N)	Std. Dev. (SD	Df	Z-cal	Z-table	Remark
In relationship	249	3.218	0.987	287	3.543	1.96	Significant
Not in relationship	40	3.901	1.063				

The mean and standard deviation scores of the two groups of participants using their CGPA scores were computed using Z-test statistics. The calculated Z-value of 3.543 is greater than its critical value of 1.960 at 287 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This implies

that a difference do exist between the academic performance of those involved in dating and those who do not. Therefore, those who do not involved in dating are more prone to academic excellence compared to their counterparts involved in dating. This finding lend credence from the findings of Quatman, et al.(2001) reveal that high school students who were dating exhibited consistently and significantly mixed levels of academic achievement and academic motivation.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients of the Relationship between undergraduates' dating behaviour and academic performance

Variables		Dating	Academic Performance
Dating	Pearson correlation	1	.671
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	289	289
Acad. Perf	Pearson correlation	.671	1
	Sig. (2-tailed	.003	
	N	289	289

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 3 revealed a positive significant relationship between undergraduates' dating behaviour and academic performance (r = .671; p>.05). The hypothesis which stated that "There is no significant relationship between undergraduates' dating behaviour and academic performance" was rejected while the alternate hypothesis retained. This implies that undergraduates' academic performance to a great extent would be influenced by their dating and sexual behaviour. This corroborates the findings of Sabia and Rees (2009) that reported a strong relationship between students' sexual relationship and their academic performance.

Table 4: Model Summary of the Regression Analysis on the prediction of dating behaviour on undergraduates' academic performance

Model	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	SE	Change Statistics				
					R^2 Change	F Change	d f 1	d f 2	Sig. F Change
Predictor Variables	.538	.289	.271	3.319	.271	21.501	1	287	.013

a. Predictions: (Constant), Dating

b. Dependent Variable: Acad. achievement

The results in Table 4 indicated a significant prediction of dating behaviour on undergraduates' academic achievement (R = .538; R^2 = .289; Adj. R^2 = .271; $F_{(1,287)}$ = 21.501; p <.05). It was shown that dating behaviour accounted for 27.1% of the variance in the undergraduates' academic achievement. The implication of this finding is that dating behaviour or sexual relationship is probably the single most common distractor in academic endeavour of many students studying in higher institution, even among the brilliant students. The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the finding of Rector and Johnson(2005) that teenage sexual abstinence and academic achievement revealed that 60% of students who consistently abstained from sex are likely to be academically focused, 50% likely to remain in school, and have high tendency to graduate from college.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study provides evidence of a salient relationship between the dating behaviour and academic performance of students in mathematics in tertiary institutions. One of the protective factors for adolescents wellbeing is rooted in their educational attainment. However, dating has been seen as a prominent factor influencing the academic performance of students in mathematics in tertiary institutions. The result of this study confirms that there is statistically significant relationship between dating and academic performance of students in mathematics. A significant difference was observed between male and female dating behaviour, while dating influences their academic performance. Also, there is statistically significant difference between male and female influence of dating on undergraduates' mathematics academic performance. These findings were further re-established by the result obtained from testing the five null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of this study, the following recommendations are made:

i. Teachers, parents, and the community at large have to effectively play their role to bringing up the children to become responsible individuals. Sexual and reproductive health education is necessary in this context, which should be channeled from different angles of human interactional opportunities: home, school, play grounds, churches, etc.

ii. Counselling and guidance systems in educational institutions should be made strong enough to carry activities that will help learners get the best out of their school lives. Students sometimes get into severe problems because they lack support and help network. They lack services where to seek help when they are stressed, depressed, or confused in making decisions.

iii. Nigeria needs a rethink on its education system in general, and plan to invest much on human capital. Sexuality education curriculum should be implemented in schools as a matter of urgency. The levels, to which it should be decided according to levels of the learners and each level should have its contents that inform of the basics about sex and sexuality matters.

iv. Peer group education in schools should be initiated and where already exist be strengthened to help students share experiences and educate themselves on different matters including sex and sexuality. The peer groups formed in schools should have specific aims and goals to achieve at different times of their operation.

REFERENCES

Akindele-Oscar, A. B. and Ayodele, K.O. (2004).Undergraduates' knowledge of reproductive health issues and its relationship with their permissive sexual expression. *Nigerian Journal of Applied Psychology,* 8,1, 240-249.

Ayodele, K. O (2011) Fostering Adolescents' Interpersonal Behaviour: An Empirical Assessment of Enhanced Thinking Skills and Social Skills Training. *Edo Journal of Counselling*, 4(1 & 2), 62-72.

Bailey, J. M., Gaulin, S., Agyei, Y., &Gladue, B. A. (1994). EVects of gender and sexual orientation on evolutionarily relevant aspects of human mating psychology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 66*, 1081–1093.

Ikpe, E. B. (2004). *Human sexuality in Nigeria: A historical perspective.* Understanding human sexuality seminar series. 2. Africa regional sexuality resource centre.

Jackson, J. J., & Kirkpatrick, L. A. (2007). The structure and measurement of human mating strategies: Toward a multidimensional model of socio-sexuality. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 28*, 382-391.

Jones, N., &Espey, J. (2008). *Increasing visibility and promoting policy action to tackle sexual exploitation in and around schools in Africa: A briefing paper with a focus on West Africa.* Dakar: Plan West Africa.

Mlyakado, B. P. (2012). Gender and education opportunities in Tanzania: "Do we bridge the gap of quality?". *Academic Research International, 3*(3), 246-255.

Mlyakado, B. P. (2013). Schoolgirls' knowledge of, and efforts against risky sexual activity: The needs for sex education in schools. *International Journal of Education,5*(1), 69-80. doi:10.5296/ije.v5i1.2825.

Ogunsanya, E.A. (2007). Adolescents' perception of sex symbol, values, risks and misconceptions. *Ogun Journal of Counselling Studies*, 1, 1, 144-152.

Olusakin, M.O. &Parmer, T. (2007). Nigerian college students' attitudes about love, marriage and sexual relations: implications for family counselling. *International Journal of Educational Research,* 3, 1, 35-46.

Ostovich, J. M., &Sabini, J. (2005). Timing of puberty and sexuality in men and women. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 34*, 197–206.

Rector, R., & Johnson, K. A. (2005). Teenage sexual abstinence and academic achievement. *The Ninth Annual Abstinence Clearinghouse Conference.*

Simpson, J. A., &Gangestad, S. W. (1991). Individual differences in sociosexuality: evidence for convergent and discriminant validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*, 870–883.

Timothy, N. (2010). *The influence of sexual relationship on the academic performance in secondary schools students and university students in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: The case of Kinondoni district.* Dar es Salaam: University of Dar esSalaam. Unpublished MA Dissertation.