

## CAUSES OF PRE-MARITAL SEX AMONG EDUCATED PEOPLE IN ONDO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ONDO STATE

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State. For the sampling technique procedure, the researcher stratified the respondents into different strata of gender, age and religion. The researcher therefore employed simple random sampling technique to select two hundred (200) educated people consisting of seventy five (75) males and one hundred and twenty five (125) females. Questionnaire titled, Causes of Pre-marital Sex among Educated People in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State Questionnaire (CPSEPOWLGAOSQ) was used to collect relevant data. The t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to test three null hypotheses, and where the result of ANOVA showed a significant difference, Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistics was used to determine the group(s) that led to the significant difference. All null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings showed that item 3 which states that Media influence has a mean score of 2.97 ranked 1<sup>st</sup> as the highest causes of pre-marital sex, while item 1 which states that Peer pressure has a mean score of 2.59 ranked 10<sup>th</sup> as the least causes of pre-marital sex. In addition, the findings showed that there was no significant difference in the expression of the respondents based on age and gender, while significant differences were noticed based religion. Based on the findings, it was recommended that professional counsellors should organize seminars to educate the adolescents on how to avoid pre-marital sex and its negative consequences like abortion which can lead to the death of the female partner.

**Keywords:** Educated People, Pre-marital sex, Sexual behaviour Sexual maturation

### **Introduction**

Pre-marital sex is an activity between a male and female before getting married. Pre-marital sex refers to sexual activity between individuals who are yet to be married. Pre-marital sex among adolescents is a pressing concern world-wide. Adolescents usually face this challenge during their transformative phase of sexual maturation. The prevalence of pre-marital sexual behaviour exposes them to risks of unsafe abortions, unintended pregnancies and which of course, sexually transmitted diseases. A study in Indonesia found a correlation between knowledge and pre-marital sex behaviour among high school students. The more knowledgeable students were about sex, the more likely they were to engage in pre-marital sex, furthermore, parental styles play a great role in the lives of adolescents whose parents do not care much about their children welfare and sexual behaviour. Other causes of pre-marital sex among the adolescents include peer pressure, media influence, level of knowledge on sexual activities.

Pre-marital sex is voluntary sexual intercourse between unmarried people and it's increasing world-wide (Santelli, et. al., 2017). According to Aleke et. al. (2021), adolescent is a crucial and transitional stage in life, from childhood to adulthood that is characterized by curiosity and adventures. Ogbueghu

(2017) asserted that, the rate of teenage pregnancy and the high level of indulgence in pre-marital sex among the school children in this 21st century have become subjects of discourse. Ezeugwa and Ede (2016) revealed that, children have been observed to be engaging in sexual activities without proper education and consequently they are exposed and induce to unfamiliar risks and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) like gonorrhea, syphilis, candidiasis, Chlamydia and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and the like.

This topic has been a subject of discussion across different cultures and disciplines. According to World Health Organization (WHO), sexual health is a fundamental aspect of human well-being and understanding the factors that influences sexual behaviour is important for promoting healthy relationships and parenting negative outcomes (WHO, 2018). Different studies have shown that pre-marital sex is a common phenomenon globally, with varying prevalence rates across different regions and cultures. A research published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that approximately 60% of young adults in the United States of America are parted having had pre-marital sex (Martinez et. al., 2011).

The causes of pre-marital sex are complex and multifaceted, involving individual social, cultural and economic factors. Key factors contributing to pre-marital sex: peer influence, media exposure, financial motivations, curiosity and desire to experiment with sexual behaviour which are common among young adults, single parenthood, economic reasons like poverty or financial instability, academic progression.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Pre-marital sex is a growing concern world-wide in which Africa is inclusive, where traditional values and cultural norms are being challenged. Several studies have explored the complexities of pre-marital sex among adolescents and young adults, some authors are Tobiololo (2016) who found that, high school students in the district of Buruanga disagreed on the practice of pre-marital sex, citing mass media, books, and friends as a major source of information about sex. Harnani, Alansyah, and Hidayati (2018) found a significant relationship between pre-marital sex and factors like boyfriend status, pornography exposure, and peer influence among adolescent street children in Pekanbaru. Also, Teo and Simon (2019) investigated the perception of pre-marital sex among students. Bolu-Steve and Ajiboye (2023) found that negative peer pressure, cohabitation, and sexual harassment were significant causes of pre-marital sex among female students of Oke-Ogun Polytechnic, Nigeria. Other researches highlighted the importance of family relationships, self-esteem, and emotional regulation in shaping sexual behaviour (Buhi & Goodson, 2007). It is the gaps left by the above authors that the present study intends to bridge which is titled, causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State.

### **Research Question**

One research question was raised for the study:

1. What are the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State?

## Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on age.
3. There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on religion.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The research design that was adopted for this study was descriptive survey method which generally involves collection of data from a defined population to describe the present condition of the population being investigated using the variables under survey. Based on this, the researcher considered the method as being appropriate to use for the present study since the method would facilitate making inferences from data collected.

### Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study consisted of educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State. However, two hundred (200) respondents were randomly selected consisting of seventy five (75) males and one hundred and twenty five (125) females. The respondents were stratified into different strata of gender, age and religion. After which a simple random sampling technique was employed to select two hundred (200) respondents.

### Instrumentation

The main instrument used for collecting data for this research was developed by the researcher and it was tagged “Causes of Pre-marital Sex among Educated People Questionnaire (CPSEPQ)”. Items in the questionnaire were derived from information obtained from the review of related literature. The instrument has two sections, that is, sections “A” and “B”. Section “A” contains demographic data of the respondents, while section “B” consisted of items on causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State. The 4-point Likert type response format was adopted for use in section B, thus:

SA = Strongly Agree (4 points), A = Agree (3 points), D = Disagree (2 points) and SD = Strongly Disagree (1 point)

All the items were positively structured, which means that the scores would not be reversed.

### Psychometric Properties

**Validity:** In order to ensure both content and face validity, the instrument was validated by five experts in Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo.

**Reliability:** The reliability of the instrument used for this study was established using test-retest method within an interval of four weeks. After which the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in computing the data generated and co-efficient of 0.76 was obtained which means that the instrument was reliable for usage.

## Method of Data Analysis

The researcher employed inferential statistics for the data analysis. The t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistical tools were used to test the null hypotheses. All the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State. This section therefore, presents the result obtained from the analysis of data and the interpretation of the findings on the study.

The results are presented in three sections. The first section provides the descriptive (demographic) data which was analysed using frequency counts and simple percentages, while the second section was analysed with the use of inferential statistic. The results obtained from null hypotheses postulated and tested are presented in this section. The third section of this study presents the discussion of findings.

## Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section covers demographic data of the respondents using frequency counts and percentages.

**Table 1: The distributions of respondents on variables**

Variable	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	75	37.5
	Female	125	62.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>	15-20 years	61	30.5
	21-30 years	94	47.0
	31 years and above	45	22.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Christian	117	58.5
	Islam	64	32.0
	African Trad. Rel (ATR)	19	9.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 indicated that 75 (37.5%) of the respondents were males while 125 (62.5%) were females. Between the ages of 15-20 years, we have 61 (30.5%) respondents, between 21-30 years we have 94 (47.0%) respondents, between ages, while between ages 31 years and above, we have 45 (22.5%). For religion, 117 (58.5%) of the respondents were Christian, 64 (32.0%) were Islam while 19 (9.5%) were African Traditional Religion (ATR).

**Research Question 1:** What are the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State?

**Table 2: Mean and Rank order analysis of the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State**

Item No	Item	Mean	Rank
3	Media influence	2.97	1 <sup>st</sup>
9	Substance abuse	2.86	2 <sup>nd</sup>
6	Pressure from partners	2.79	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Lack of moral guidance from parents, teachers, etc.	2.75	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Easy access to contraceptives	2.73	5 <sup>th</sup>
2	Lack of sex education	2.72	6 <sup>th</sup>
10	Lack of self-esteem i.e. low self-esteem and self-worth.	2.70	7 <sup>th</sup>
8	Family and social factors like broken home, poverty, etc.	2.63	8 <sup>th</sup>
7	Curiosity and experimentation	2.60	9 <sup>th</sup>
1	Peer pressure	2.59	10 <sup>th</sup>

From Table 2 above, item 3 which states that Media influence has a mean score of 2.97 ranked 1st, while item 1 which states that Peer pressure has a mean score of 2.59 ranked 10th.

### Hypotheses Testing

In this study, three (3) null hypotheses were formulated and tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical procedure. Significant differences were determined at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on gender.

**Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of respondents' view on the basis of gender**

Gender	N	Mean	Std Dev	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	75	27.6533	2.2511					
Female	125	27.1920	2.6448	198	1.26	1.96	0.26	Accepted

\*Significant;  $p < 0.05$  alpha level

Table 3 above shows the mean, standard deviation and t-value of respondents on the basis of gender. The result on the above table revealed that the calculated t-value of 1.26 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with 198 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value of 0.26 is greater than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State on the basis of gender.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on age.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on age**

Source	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value	p-value	Decision
Between Group	2	.846	.423				
Within Group	197	1251.509	6.353	.067	2.60	0.94	Accepted
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>1252.355</b>					

\* Significant;  $p < 0.05$  alpha level

Table 4 above presents the calculated F-value of 0.067 which is less than the critical F-value of 2.60 at 0.05 alpha level. And since the p-value of 0.94 which is greater than 0.05, thus the hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State on the basis of age.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on religion.

**Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State based on religion**

Source	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value	p-value	Decision
Between Group	2	29.576	14.788				
Within Group	197	2114.424	10.733	4.378	2.60	0.00	Rejected
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>2144.000</b>					

\* Significant;  $p < 0.05$  alpha level

Table 5 above presents the calculated F-value of 4.378 which is greater than the critical F-value of 2.60 at 0.05 alpha level. And since the p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05, thus the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State on the basis of religion. In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 5, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure are displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing differences in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State on the basis of religion**

Religion	Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group
African Trad. Religion	A	25.47	19	1
Muslim	B	26.62	117	2
Christian	C	26.89	64	3

Table 6 above presents Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) result to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of Table 5. The DMRT results indicated that



group 1 with mean score of 25.47 differed significantly from group 2, with a mean score of 26.62 and also greatly differed from group 3 with a mean score of 26.89. Hence, all group are significantly different to each other. However, group 3 (Christian) has the highest level of causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The results of the study showed that educated people in Ondo are similar in their perceptions on the causes of pre-marital sex among adolescents in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria based on gender and age while a significant difference was observed based on religion. In addition, based on the means rank order, item 3 which states “Media influence” with a mean score of 2.97 ranked 1st while, item 1 which states “Peer pressure” with a mean score of 2.59 ranked 10th.

The first null hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria based on gender. This finding corroborates the finding of Ogbueghu (2017) in which the study shows no significant difference while it negates the study of Ezeugwa and Ede (2016) which does not agree with the result of the finding.

The second null hypothesis indicated that no significant difference among the educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria in their perception of causes of pre-marital sex among adolescents based on age. This finding is in line with the finding of Martinez, Copen and Abina (2011) in which the study agreed with the outcome of the present study. However, this study disagreed with the study of Ezeugwa and Ede (2016) in which the respondents’ responses are not similar.

The third null hypothesis indicated that the perceptions of the educated people are similar which is in line with the study of Buhi and Goodson (2007). The plausible reason for the outcome of this finding might be because or due to the fact that the respondents differed in terms of religion. This finding negates the finding of World Health organization (2018) in which the results indicated a significant difference.

### **Conclusion**

Pre-marital sex is a well known concept across Nigeria even at the secondary school level. The high rate of this calls for a research into the causes. Thus, this study concludes that the major causes of pre-marital sex among educated people in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State are negative peer pressure, cohabitation, and sexual harassment.

### **Recommendations/Counselling Implications**

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

1. Non-governmental Agencies should do more on the adolescents in Ondo West Local Government Area, Ondo State.
2. Professional counsellors should organize seminars to educate the adolescents on how to avoid pre-marital sex and its negative consequences like abortion which can lead to the death of the female partner.

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