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# Influence of Mass Media and Peer Pressure on Upper Basic Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour in Edo and Delta States

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of mass media and peer pressure on Upper Basic Social Studies students' sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was Fifty-one thousand, six hundred and twenty-four. The sample size for the study was 720 respondents arrived at using the multi-stage sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Data generated were analyzed using the simple correlation statistics for the research questions while the Simple Regression was used to test the formulated null hypotheses at an alpha of 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that, there was a significant relationship between mass media and peer pressure on Upper Basic Social Studies Students sexual behaviour in the area under review. The study concluded that mass media and peer pressure influences Upper Basic Social Studies Students sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States. The study recommended that government could strictly sanction the accessibility of adolescents to certain media messages, especially those on sex. Also, the mass media could be made to provide filtered and strict messages on sex education and sexual behaviour.

## KEYWORDS:

Mass Media, Peer Pressure, Social Studies, Sexual Behaviour.



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## Introduction

Sexual behaviour of students in recent times has become very problematic. Coital and premarital sex among Nigeria students are on the increase. It appears present day school children, Social Studies students inclusive value sexual activities more compared to their mates of the old; which invariably leads to complications amongst adolescents in the society if not managed appropriately. Samuel and Sanusi (2019) stressed that more than one million adolescents become pregnant with sixty-five percent of them having babies out of wedlock; giving credence to the fact that students sexual behaviour needs to be checked. Rapid development of social changes has pushed off the traditional customs with regards to students' sexual behaviours. Before now, the traditional customs helped to curtail premarital sexual involvement among students; but now, they exhibit their sexual behaviour in different forms. Nigussie et al (2020) described different types of sexual behaviour exhibited by secondary school students; explaining that some of them include bodily contact below the neck, hand holding, touching one another's genital organ through the clothing and oral sex. Students, Social Studies students inclusive, who are in their adolescent stage are characterized by certain background features that have increasing influence on their levels of sexual behaviour that should be investigated and understood. Adolescence is seen as the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. The period of adolescence involves biological, cognitive, socio-emotional and personality changes. The major task of students is preparation for adulthood. During the period of transition, an individual leaves childhood and prepares to enter adulthood and that many students make this transition without serious difficulties (Johnson & Bassey, 2019).

Mass media plays a key role in entertaining and enlightening its audience, and the extent to which its programmes and services are imbibed by adolescents needs to be examined. Most students copy and experiment what they see and hear on mass media, not minding its attendant consequences to themselves and the society at large. The mass media is veritable means by which information and knowledge are disseminated to its audience; and programmes aired or shown are copied and experimented on by adolescents.

These teen years where a person can easily fall into social deviations, especially deviations of free sex. In this modern era, a lot of incorrect information about sex is spread both in the electronic media and in the mass media (Daryanti, Sansuwito & Elba, 2021). The high rate of abortion due to adolescent free sex association is 900 thousand Indonesian teenagers because it is affected by the rise of pornographic Video Compact Discs and victims of the sophistication of internet technology that broadcasts many pornographic sites. Emotional stimuli that many victim of sexual behaviour talk about are stimulation of problems due to stimulating scenes in mass media such as television, films, cellphones, magazines, books, and some of them. Pornography stimulates sexually, undermines moral values encourages sexual behaviour (Keller & Brown, 2016). Based on the results of a preliminary study, which was conducted to one teacher explained that when a cell phone was held, many students had a file containing pornography. Then 20 students were given question sheets about the use of electronic media and their sexual behaviour, they answered in writing on the answer sheets provided.

The results showed that 12 students often view and watch accounts that are pornographic and 8 students like to engage in risky sexual behaviour. This goes to show the influence mass media have on students' sexual behaviour and their attitude is usually tailored towards what they watch, see and observed from the mass media, social media inclusive.

Peer pressure denotes the direct influence on a person by his/her peers through following their conduct, attitudes, and ways (Bruno & Manju, 2019). It varies from social influences as it makes a person change his/her approach or behaviour with respect to the influencing individual or group. Peer pressure has been found to influence any person regardless of age, gender, or ethnic background and in whatever activities they engaged in; which in this case is sexual behaviour of Social Studies students. It is pertinent to note that apart from negative behaviour, peer pressure may also result in constructive impacts the moment teenagers get influenced by their peers towards positive conduct, for example, engaging in charitable tasks and working hard to excel in schoolwork or sports.

According to some studies, many adolescents are convinced that joining peer groups and seeking to outshine their friends in whatever task including indulging in sexual behaviour will make them popular (Bonein & Denant-Boèmont, 2015). In this regard, the average adolescents draws pressure from school, friends, or parents, which elicits the desire to belong to at least one group which ends up influencing their sexuality. In most instances, peer groups take part in violence, burglary, alcohol consumption, robbery, smoking, substance abuse, and premarital sex. It has been established that teenagers spend most of their time with peers rather than parents or other adults. In this regard, the adolescents who develop either positive or negative sexual behaviour stay clear of opposing groups and find the ones who propagate comparable actions and make them as friends. The sexual behaviour of adolescent, Social Studies students in particular do take different forms and can only be checkmated by a sound doctrine from parents, guardian, society and religion, with the later being the most suspicious of due to the African societal setting where the church is revered the most in issues of morality. The glamorization of sex and suggestive sexual scene in the media and peer pressure, with regards to indecent dressing, amongst others may account for bad sexual behaviour; which necessitated this investigation to ascertain the extent to which they influence Social Studies Students sexual behaviour in the area under review

### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

- i. What is the relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States?
- ii. What is the relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies student towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

- i. There is no significant relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies student towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States.

### Mass Media and Students' Sexual Behaviour

Mass media which include newspapers, radio television and internet have an immense impact on young minds. With the advent of the internet, television definitely has got a partner in the role of visual stimulation of the young minds. Unfortunately, the ideas canvassed in the media represent glamour, sexual satisfaction and promiscuity, comedic vulgarity, violence and immediate satisfaction of sexual needs (Envuladu, Kwaak, Zwanikken & Zoakah, 2017).

Mass media are those media that are designed to be consumed by large audiences through the agencies of technology. An array of communication media reaches large numbers of the public, including radio, television, movies, newspapers, and magazines. The Internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmits information and services such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer, interlinked web pages, and other documents of the World Wide Web (Wakoli, 2018). Media influences on sexual behaviour were first reported in a Sex Education newsletter in 1981 and since then several overviews have examined students' use of media as a source of information and its possible effect on their sexual behaviour (Adebola, 2015). Students are vigorous users of the information broadcast in the media. Concern has been raised about the influence of media portrayals on sexual contents and the normative expectations of these students at a critical developmental stage (Owan et al., 2020).

The mass media and the Internet have their advantages in terms of providing necessary information for young people on sexual health and healthy sexual relationships, but many studies have shown that mass media negatively influences teens in their sexual behaviours (Nworgu, 2020). Over the past two decades, studies have shown an overall increase in the number of portrayals of and the amount of discussion about sex in these media and an increase in the explicitness of these portrayals. Furthermore, television research shows a fairly consistent sexual message across television genres: most portrayals of sex depict or imply sexual intercourse between unmarried adults, with little or no reference to sexually transmitted infections or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), pregnancy, or use of contraception (Ozobo & Enoch, 2020).

### Peer Pressure and Students' Sexual Behaviour

Investigators have proved that the sexual behaviour of the students are influenced by their peer. Most importantly, their best friends influence studies like Ndie, Anene and Ezenduka (2019) stressed that students influence their peers by modelling behaviours and setting social norms. They emphasized that peer pressure is often thought to be a negative force on students, but their study demonstrates that it is of a more positive one. Using data from the national longitudinal study of students health, Badaki and Adeola (2017) revealed that students' substance use was associated with the substance use of both the students' peer clique and social crowd, although best friend influence was still most influential, and that best friend influence interacted with these broader peer concepts.

On the other hand, Bruno and Monju (2019) opined that no evidence of a social crowd influence affect peers; they pointed only best friend influence was of significant importance. Delfriana, Dinda and Prodalima (2016) tested peer influence by using measures of friends' risk behaviour, the risk behaviour of friends, and risk behaviour of friends three or more steps beyond the students. Results indicated that friends of friends did affect behaviour in profound ways, but that best friends of friends, and the risk behaviour of friends three or more steps beyond the students. Results also indicated that friends of friends did affect behaviour in profound ways, but that best friends are still most important.

Associations between close friends' sexual behaviour are well documented (Delfriana, Dinda & Prodalima, 2016). Although these patterns could indicate a peer socialization effect, selection may also play a role, if students choose friends who are like themselves in attitudes and behaviour (Elizabeth, Richard, Audrey and Hargreaves, 2015). In a longitudinal study, best friends' sexual experience was strongly associated with the initiation of intercourse for white females, but for white males the association appeared to reflect boys' selection of friends with levels of sexual experience

similar to their own. No evidence of peer influence was found for blacks of either gender (Eyiah-Bediako, Frank, Joshua & John, 2021).

## Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all Upper Basic II Social Studies Students in Edo and Delta States public secondary schools; succinctly put at 51, 624. The multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 720 respondents as the sample size for the study. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The instrument obtained a reliability index of 0.793; making it reliable for use for this study. The collated data were analyzed using the simple correlation and the simple regression (ANOVA) for the research questions and formulated null hypotheses at an alpha of 0.05 level of significance. This was done to establish relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable of the study.

## Results

**Research Questions 1:** What is the relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States?

**Table 1: Simple Correlation Analysis of Mass Media and Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour**

Variables	N	r	r <sup>2</sup>	r <sup>2adj</sup>
Mass Media				
Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour	720	.086	.007	.006

Independent Variable: Mass Media, Dependent Variable: Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour.

Table 1 presents the simple correlation results. It revealed that mass media as indicated by r-value of .086 showed a positive relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies Students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta State. This provides an answer to research question 6 which revealed that there is a positive relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour. The r<sup>2</sup> adjusted value of .006 indicated that mass media has impact on sexual behaviour of students in the study area.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States. In order to test hypothesis 1, simple regression was computed. The summary of the output is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis of the relationship between Mass Media and Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Score	( $\bar{x}$ )	f	t	Std Error	Sig
Regression	101.231	1	101.231		5.311	-2.305	.217	.02
Residual	13495.193	719	19.061					
Total	13596.424	720						

P ≤ 0.05 level of significance; N = 720

As shown in Table 2, the computed ANOVA produced an F = 5.311, P ≤ 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between mass media and Upper

Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour is rejected. The finding is that there is a significant relationship between mass media and Social Studies students' sexual behaviour. The conclusion is reached that mass media has positive correlation to sexual behaviour of students involved in this study.

**Research Questions 2:** What is the relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States?

**Table 3: Simple Correlation Analysis of Peer Pressure and Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour**

Variables	N	r	r <sup>2</sup>	r <sup>2adj</sup>
Peer Pressure				
Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour	720	.088	.008	.006

Independent Variable: Peer Pressure, Dependent Variable: Social Studies Students Sexual behaviour.

Table 3 presents the simple correlation results where it was revealed that peer pressure as indicated by r-value of .088 showed a positive relationship between peer pressure and Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour in Edo and Delta States. It revealed further that there is a positive relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States. The r<sup>2</sup> adjusted value of .006 indicated that peer pressure has impact on Social Studies students sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States. In order to test hypothesis 2, simple regression was computed. The summary of the output is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Simple Regression Analysis of the relationship between Peer Pressure and Social Studies Students Sexual Behaviour**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Score	F	t	Std Error	Sig
Regression	105.862	1	105.862	5.556	-2.357	.040	.02
Residual	13490.561	719	19.057				
Total	13596.424	720					

P ≤ 0.05 level of significance; N = 720

As shown in Table 2, the computed ANOVA produced an F = 5.556, P ≤ 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States was rejected. The finding is that there is a significant relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies students towards sexual behaviour. The conclusion is reached that peer pressure has positive contribution to sexual behaviour of students involved in this study.

## Discussion of Findings

Result from hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant relationship between mass media and Upper Basic Social Studies Students towards sexual behaviour. Findings from this study showed the sway the mass media has on adolescent sexual behaviour. This is made rampant because of the proliferation of different sites with easy access to sexual contents. The current study agrees with

the findings of Vandebosch, Johanna, van Oosten and Peter (2015) who stated that one of the factors associated with early sex initiation is the exposure to mass media. They stated that the media influences the youth with the display and showing of explicit contents, which youth end up being curious of that leads to it being practicalized.

In the same token, the study also aligned with the work of Omorodion, Jangu, Kerr and Etowa (2021) who observed that the mass media negatively influences sexual behaviour among teens. Noting that youths often time like to adapt the behaviours of some of the heroes or heroines they watch on television programmes. Omorodion, Jangu, Kerr and Etowa (2021) stated further that sexual discussions and displays are increasingly frequent and explicit in all forms of the mass media; hence, its influence on the adolescents is huge. It is pertinent to note that the Internet, the use of which is growing more rapidly than any previous technology, has dramatically increased the availability of sexually explicit content with easy access to the youth; thus, Ozobo and Enoch (2020) noted that the inclusion of sexual content that ranged from flirting to sexual intercourse had increased from slightly more than half of television programmes in 20<sup>th</sup> Century to more than two-thirds of the programmes in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; thus, making accessibility to sexual content easy for the teeming youth. The study is also in agreement with the work of Envuladu, Kwaak, Zwanikken and Zoakah (2017) who found that frequency of Internet sexually explicit material consumption was associated with adventurous sex, paying for sex or being paid for sex. This shows the rate of influence the mass media has on students' sexual behaviour.

Result from hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant relationship between peer pressure and Upper Basic Social Studies Students towards sexual behaviour. This finding showed the sway of Social Studies student peers in their sexual indulgence. This finding was given impetus by the findings of Ndie, Anene and Ezenduka (2019) who stressed that students influence their peers by modelling behaviours and setting social norms. They emphasized that peer pressure is often thought to be a negative force on students, but their study demonstrates that it is of a more positive one. In the same vein, this current study aligned with the work of Badaki and Adeola (2017) who revealed that students' substance use was associated with the substance use of both the students' peer clique and social crowd, although best friend influence was still most influential, and that best friend influence interacted with these broader peer concepts. The implication here is that students peers can easily influence one to engage in either positive or negative activities depending on the clique and social crowd one belongs to.

Contrastingly, this current study disagrees with the study by Bruno and Monju (2019) who opined that no evidence of a social crowd influences affect peers; they pointed only best friend influence was of significant. Delfriana, Dinda and Prodalima (2016) on their part noted that friends did affect behaviour in profound ways, but that best friends of friends, and the risk behaviour of friends are three or more steps beyond the students. The current study findings also agrees with the study by Bruno and Monju (2019) who noted that that young people sexual behaviours are greatly influenced by their peers; intimate relationships and use of sexual language. Their study noted further that these influence happened because since young people depend on peer support, they tend to engage in the activities and behaviour which peers practice.

Elizabeth, Richard, Audrey and Hargreaves (2015) is at variance with the findings of the current study in that they found no evidence for an association between peers and sexual behaviour for at least one peer exposure/outcome/sub-group association. Noting that, there were no clear patterns by type of peer exposure, outcome or adolescent sub-group with any conclusive evidence about the role of peers in adolescent sexual behaviour. In addition, the current study agrees with the

findings of Adegboyega, Ayoola and Muhammed (2019) who revealed that the influence of peer pressure on sexual behaviour of undergraduates leads students to erotic electro-stimulation, prostitution, risk of contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) and involvement in incest.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that mass media influences Upper Basic Social Studies Students sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States and that peer pressure influences Upper Basic Social Studies Students sexual behaviour in Edo and Delta States.

### **Recommendations**

Following from the conclusion, the study recommended that government could strictly sanction the accessibility of adolescents to certain media messages, especially those on sex. Also, the mass media could be made to provide filtered and strict messages on sex education and sexual behaviour.



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