

# Prevalence of Premarital Sex among Adolescents in Kulende, Sango in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Premarital sex is explained as a penetrative vaginal or anal sexual intercourse performed between couples before formal marriage. It is characterized as being unanticipated, unpredictable, inconsistency with values and personality, uncontrollable and becoming the common feature of adolescents. This study investigated (i) peer pressure and (ii) poor parents-adolescent communications as factors influencing premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. A descriptive research design of survey type was employed for this study. The population for the study comprised of all Adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select four two hundred (200) respondents for the study. Researcher's designed structured questionnaire which was validated by four experts from the Departments of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education; University of Ilorin. A correlation co-efficient of .75r was obtained through test re-test method using Pearson Product Moment Correlation on respondents outside the study sample. Data collection was conducted by the researchers and four trained research assistants. The two postulated null hypotheses were tested using the inferential statistics of chi-square @0.05 alpha level. The finding of this study revealed that i. Peer Pressure influenced premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria with the calculated chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 159.842 is greater than the table chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 16.92 at the freedom (df) 9 @ 0.05 alpha level and ii. Poor Parents-adolescents communications influenced premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State with the calculated chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 165.853 is greater than the table chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 16.92 at the freedom (df) 9 @ 0.05 alpha level. Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that peer pressure and poor parents-adolescent communication influenced premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. Therefore, it was recommended that i. teachers and school guardians should sensitize their students on the influence of peers in the engagement of adolescents in premarital sex and ii. parents and guardians should take it as their responsibility to create an intimacy, a good relationship and communication skills with their children as this will limit adolescent's early exposure to premarital sex.

**Keywords:** Prevalence, Premarital, Sex and Adolescents.

## Introduction

Sex is one of the most profound emotionally charged, mysterious experiences that mortals have. Its necessity and importance in proper adult's physical and emotional functioning is incontrovertible. However, in order for it not to have negative consequences, there

is need to apply caution and restraint. Sexual activities among adolescents have been reported to be increasing worldwide. Several studies in sub-Saharan Africa have also documented high and increasing premarital sexual activities among adolescents<sup>9</sup>. Premarital sex is an act of deviation, it is a departure from social norms that attract

social disapproval which is likely to elicit negative sanctions<sup>1</sup>.

Furthermore, Pre-marital sex is explained as a penetrative vaginal or anal sexual intercourse performed between couples before formal marriage. It is characterized as being unanticipated, unpredictable, inconsistency with values and personality, uncontrollable and becoming the common feature of adolescents. More than half of the world population constitutes young people that are less than 25 years old, and majority of the populations live in developing country. Starting from a recent time, premarital sexual action during adolescence and emerging adulthood leads to a wide range of adverse outcomes in sub Saharan Africa which include unintended pregnancies, illegal abortions, and sexually transmitted Infections<sup>10</sup>.

Premarital sex and early initiation of sexual activity may prolong the period of exposure to risks of unwanted pregnancy and contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) such as HIV/Aids during their reproductive life span<sup>2</sup>. Ethiopia is one of the country where an increasing number of adolescents are involved in unsafe sexual practices and hence face undesired outcomes such as unplanned pregnancy, early childbirth, unsafe abortion and sexually transmitted disease. High level synthesis may be enhanced as a result of an increasingly large number of adolescent's enrolment in preparatory schools<sup>11</sup>. Recently, early initiation to sexual intercourse without having proper protection has been one of the concerns. Adolescents often encounter high risk situations, such as contracting STDs, HIV/AIDS and often experience unintended pregnancy, illicit abortion and its negative sequel<sup>7</sup>.

In Southwestern Nigeria, sex before now was regarded as sacred and limited only to adult males and females within marriage but today, many adolescents engage in various delinquent behaviour such as drinking of alcohol, smoking and premarital sexual activities. Furthermore, it was discovered that the prevalence of premarital sex among adolescents was caused as a result of certain social and demographic factors among which include age, gender, parental style, culture, religion, peer influence, among others. Concluded. Among the background variables considered mother education, age, ethnicity and employment status were among the most important predictors of attitudes towards women premarital activity<sup>3</sup>.

Peer group influence is another factor that encourages premarital sex. They were of the opinion that young people often face enormous pressure especially from peers to engage in sex. Most information for their knowledge comes from peers of the same sex who may themselves lack adequate information or are incorrectly informed. Growing peer pressure of premarital sex plays major role in sexual decision making among youths<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, Gender is an important factor in understanding attitudes towards sexual intercourse. It is a factor which is consistent with findings from Asian countries, whereas, premarital sexual activity for boys is considered a socially acceptable rite of passage<sup>8</sup>, while girls tend to be labeled and stigmatized, and are often blamed for sexual encounters that result in pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. It is likely that both girls and boys internalize subtle and overt messages about gender roles from friends, family and society which, in turn, shape different attitudes and beliefs about sexual initiation. However, the process by which gender roles influence the attitudes and beliefs about gender-distinct sexual initiation has rarely been studied, especially in Asian societies that are influenced by Confucianism having doctrines on gender role<sup>5</sup>.

Premarital behaviours of adolescents, tend to pose major threats to life and the future of the country as they involved in reckless sexual activities<sup>10</sup>. Public opinion polls have consistently shown that premarital sex is wrong and dangerous to health, resulting in abortions, teenage mothers and sexually transmitted disease. In sub-Saharan Africa, HIV infection is primarily spreading through heterosexual relations. Young people are the most vulnerable to HIV infection. They are also the most affected as they are often called upon to carry the burden of caring for risk family members<sup>4</sup>.

**Statement of the problem:** The researcher observed that the prevalence of premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango Society in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State is high, and this leads to high incidence of unintended pregnancies, contraction of sexually transmitted diseases, induced abortion and death. The prevalence of premarital sex among the adolescents is due to the influence of social and demographic factors such as gender, age, family background, peer pressure, parent education, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and parents-adolescents communication. The researcher observed that gender is one of the factors influencing the prevalence of premarital sex among adolescent. It was

observed that male adolescents are more engaging in premarital sex than their female counterparts because it was believed that boys are the initiator of premarital sex.

Adolescent is typified by great energy, pursuit of adventure, dating, experimentation with sex and the attendant outcomes most often compromise the young person's sexual and reproductive health. The desire to be regarded as the "macho man" makes boys to start having sex early and to indulge in risky sexual behavior. Most girls are coerced into having sex by adolescent boy friends who want to prove masculinity. Furthermore, the age is also a predictor for the prevalence of premarital sex among adolescents. The researcher observed that most adolescents engage in premarital sex at early ages, and this has caused a lot of serious problem to them because there is no background knowledge of what premarital sex is all about. For this cause, adolescents (11-19years) are under the risk associated with premarital sex such as psychological imbalance, anxiety, feeling guilt and loss of self-respect.

The researcher also observed that adolescents in Sango area of Ilorin South do not have good parent-adolescents communication style such as talk on sex education, sexual health matters among others, and this contributes to the prevalence of premarital sex among them. The supply and amount of parental emotional resources for control can have a significant influence on the youth to have or not to engage in premarital sex. Due to ineffective communication and good upbringing between parents and adolescents, most adolescents are exposed to premarital sex. Also, due to lack of control, the adolescent can contract sexually transmitted diseases or even thought of having abortion that may lead to death or obstetric complications. The researcher also observed that peer influence is also considerable predicting factor for prevalence of premarital sex among the adolescents. Peers like roommates, classmates, club associates and other members of one's social group members equally influence one to be a deviant or conformist. In the cause of peer pressure, most adolescents are lured into the practice of sexual deviant behaviors such as adulteries, alcohol dinking, premarital sex, drug abuse, smoking among others.

These predicting factors has led to various health and emotional issues among the adolescents among which include, dropping out from school, unintended or unwanted pregnancy, contraction of sexually transmitted diseases (Human papilloma virus, herpes, HIV/Aids etc),

induced abortion, depression, feeling guilt and shame among others. In this study, the issue of premarital sexual practice among students is fast emerging as a serial social and public health problem. Based on this study the researcher intends to explore the prevalence of premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South LGA, Kwara state.

### **Research Questions:**

**The following questions were raised to guide this study**

1. Will peer pressure influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende,Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. Will parent-adolescents communication influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses:**

**The following hypotheses were formulated for this study.**

**Ho1.** Peer pressure will not significantly influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende,Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria.

**Ho2.** Parent-adolescents communication will not significantly influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende,Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Research Methodology:**

Descriptive research design of survey type was used for this study. The Population for this study comprised all individuals between ages of 18 to 20 years in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The target population of this study consisted of adolescents in Kulende, Sango Area in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. A Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this research. Simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents (adolescents) in four (4) Secondary Schools and Market places in Ilorin South Local Government. Purposive sampling technique was used to select adolescents from ages (18-20) due to their maturity. In the second stage proportionate sampling technique of 10% was used for the study. Simple random sampling

technique was used to select the actual respondents for the study. The instrument that was used in collecting data for this research is a researcher designed questionnaire. David (2007) stated that a questionnaire allows the researcher to collect required information quickly and accurately from a large number of people at the same time. The questionnaire titled “Prevalence of Premarital Sex among Adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria” consist of two (2) sections. Section A contain demographic information of the respondents, while section B elicit information on prevalence of Premarital Sex among Adolescents in Sango, Kulende in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The items were based on the 4-points Likert scale of Strongly Agreed = 4 (SA), Agreed =3 (A), Disagreed=2 (D), and Strongly Disagreed=1 (SD). In order to ascertain the validity of the instrument, three drafted copies of the questionnaire was given to three (3) experts in Departments of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Their suggestions and comments were used to make the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using test re-test technique. Twenty (20) copies of questionnaire were given to twenty (20) respondents outside the case study area after two (2) weeks another twenty copies were administered to the same respondents. The result of the first administration was compared with the second administration using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). A coefficient of 0.75r was arrived at which shows that the instrument is reliable for the study. Description statistics of frequency count and percentage was used to analyze the demographic data of the respondents, while non-parametric statistic of chi-square was used to test the four (4) postulated hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

#### Results/Discussion of Findings

**Hypothesis 1:** Peer pressure will not significantly influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The calculated chi square value of 159.842 was greater than critical table value of 16.92 at the degree of freedom of 9 @ 0.05 alpha level of 0.05, the result of hypothesis one revealed that peer pressure influenced premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende Sango of Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria. This was supported by a research which was of the opinion that young people often face enormous pressure from peers to engage in sex<sup>4</sup>.

**Hypothesis 2:** Parents-adolescents communication will not significantly influence premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The calculated chi-square value of 149.491 was greater than the critical value of 16.92 at degree of freedom of 9 @ 0.05 alpha level, the result of hypothesis two revealed that parents-adolescents communication influenced premarital sex among adolescents in Kulende, Sango, Ilorin south Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The result of this findings agrees with a research which affirmed that frequency of parent-child communication about sex is the most common variable used to study parental impact on adolescent’s sexual attitudes and behaviours<sup>6</sup>.

#### Recommendations:

The following are the recommendations based on the outcome of this research;

1. Teachers and school guardians should sensitize their students on the influence of peers in the engagement of adolescents in premarital sex.
2. Parents and guardians should take it as a thing of responsibility to create an intimacy and have a good relationship and communication skills with their children as this will limit adolescent’s early exposure to premarital sex.

**Ethical Clearance:** Taken from Faculty of Education Ethical Review Committee, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.

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**Conflict of Interest:** Nil

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