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COHABITATION AS A CORRELATE OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ADEKUNLE AJASIN UNIVERSIRTY AKUNGBA-AKOKO

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Abstract

The study examined cohabitation as a correlate of self-esteem among undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko (AAUA). Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The subject of the study was two hundred (200) students both male and female which was randomly selected from the six faculties in AAUA. Self-modified self-esteem questionnaire, validated and approved by the researcher supervisor was used for data collection. The obtained data was analyzed using SPSS application for descriptive statistics and linear regression to test the research questions and hypotheses respectively at 0.05 significant level. All the null hypotheses were rejected, Self-esteem has a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Self-esteem has a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. This act of cohabitation should be discouraged by parents by giving close monitoring to their wards. Well organised counseling and a good orientation programme will help many of these innocent students find their bearing not to misbehave and be misdirected. The hostel accommodation provided by the university should be conducive and affordable for all the student, this may help to discourage cohabitation as most students who cohabits are off campus students.

Introduction

The over-bloated population of tertiary education students in contemporary time and the inability of the institution's managements and government to adequately provide the needed social amenities (such as hostel accommodation) and attentions have led to students trying to overuse their freedoms. University education is one that gives student full freedom to socialized and associate with different environments. This, therefore exposes the students to all forms of risk and harm as they continue to cohabit. Students who live together with their partners lack both family and the university's protection and support (Unachukwu and Iloakasia 2018).

Cohabitation is defined by social scientists as two adults of the opposite sex living together in an intimate, non-marital relationship. There has been an eight-fold increase in the number of cohabiting households since 1970, the growth of which has been accelerating (Seltzer 2004). As stated by Unachukwu and Iloakasia (2018) quoting Kennedy and Bumpass (2007) "Young people approve of cohabitation at much higher rates than their older counterparts, so it is likely that cohabitation rates will continue to rise." Cohabitation results in two independent people, almost like roommates, who have sex, instead of a commitment to one another for the rest of their lives (Rena 2011).

According to Aina (2018) quoting Arisukwu, (2013) who positioned that; "Cohabitation has serious health effect on the female students who may indulge in the use of oral contraceptive in order to avoid unwanted pregnancy which may truncate their educational aspirations. Should pregnancy

occur, such female students are more likely to seek abortion as an alternative. This has serious health challenges for such students who may visit quack doctors and medical practitioners without adequate experiences and qualifications. Some may frown at abortion and thus give birth to unwanted babies who may not be properly catered for by these students. Cohabitation among university students has led to moral decadence in the society."

Cohabitation was obscure and even a taboo throughout the nineteenth century and until the 1970s. Non-marital unions have become common because the meaning of the family has been altered by individualistic social value have progressively matured since the late 1940s. Sociologists treat cohabitation as a distinct occurrence not just because it has displaced marriage, but also because it represents a structural change in family relationships (Ogadimma 2013). Cohabitation is totally against the norms and values of African society. Allowing young unmarried couple live together especially where they do not have family affinity is often regarded as an albatross. Whereas, some students cohabit without allowing their parents to know about it, some parents are the ones encouraging their children to do so due to their inability to meet their basic needs.

Many of these students are exposed to risk and harm as they cohabit. Students who cohabit are vulnerable and susceptible to attack and abuse by both outsiders and even their partners. Formerly, the culture of premarital sexual behaviours used to be a taboo in Nigeria. Unfortunately however, the contemporary youths have abandoned this valued tradition for inglorious culture of premarital sexual activities. Age is an important factor that could influence cohabitation among university students. Now, there are many students that entered the university being very young, hence many of them are naïve (Aina 2018).

Self-esteem is an individual's subjective evaluation of his or her worth as a person (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, & Robins, 2005)—typically increases during late adolescence and young adulthood, but that individuals differ substantially in the particular self-esteem trajectory they follow (Orth & Robins, 2014; Trzesniewski, Donnellan, & Robins, 2013). Self-concept is the perception that individuals have of their own worth. This includes a composite of their feelings, a generalized view of their social acceptance, and their personal feelings about themselves (Belmore & Cillessen, 2006). High self-esteem was defined by Walz (1991) as appreciating oneself and acknowledging self-worth, self-control, and competence, with a corresponding positive attitude and high self-evaluation. Opposite to this, Brendgen (2002) defined low self-esteem as having low self-evaluations, self-criticism, and feelings of hopelessness. Both self-concept and self-esteem are fluid through a child's development and can be influenced by positive parental involvement.

Luciano and Orth (2017), opined that self-esteem increases during late adolescence and young adulthood, but that there is large inter-individual variability in this development. In late adolescence and young adulthood, individuals are faced with several important developmental transitions, which involve the adoption of new social roles. One of these transitions is the establishment of a committed romantic relationship (Hutteman, Hennecke, Orth, Reitz, & Specht, 2014). Romantic relationships are an important life domain because research suggests that relationships influence a wide range of personality and well-being outcomes (Diener, Gohm, Suh, & Oishi, 2000; Dush & Amato, 2005; Neyer & Lehnart, 2007; Wagner, Becker, Lüdtke, & Trautwein, 2015).

Self-esteem can be defined in numerous ways. Most commonly, self-esteem is defined on the basis of two psychological processes: evaluation and affect (Mruk, 2006). Evaluation accentuates the role of cognition, while affect emphasizes the role of feelings as they pertain to self-esteem. Many studies had correlated the relationship between cohabitation and academic performance, but little or no research had tried to link psychological variables to establish if students that cohabitate have high or low self-esteem. It's on this ground the researcher wants to investigate cohabitation as a correlate of self-esteem among undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko.

Cohabitation among undergraduates has become a contemporary issue plaguing many higher institutions of learning. Many students tend to lose sight of why they are in school and are preoccupied with the unessential issues. This tends to course lots of distraction for many students. The purpose why they are in school is forgotten to other responsibilities not related to learning .This tend to make many students to perform below expectations, since often times these students are never in the school/class for any serious academic work. The culture of chastity and purity is no longer promoted and encouraged among these youths. Some had argued that, those students that cohabitate may have low self-esteem while some argued that these set of students have high self-esteem. Many studies had linked social vices to low self-esteem and lack of good parental care but none had linked cohabitation to self-esteem, therefore the researcher want to investigate cohabitation as a correlate of self-esteem among undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko.

Objectives

The specific objectives for the study were;

5. To establish if relationship exist between cohabitation and self-esteem
6. To establish the male students who cohabit have high or low self esteem
7. To establish the male students who cohabit have high or low self esteem
8. To establish the male and female students who cohabit have high or low self esteem

Methods and Material

The research design to be used for this research will be correlational research design. The population of the study will comprise the entire undergraduate students of AAUA who do not stay in the University hostels. Sample and Sampling Technique(s) Sample is a proportion of population that shares all the general characteristics of the population (William, 2006).

A random sampling technique was used to select five (5) faculties in AAUA whereas, purposive sampling technique was used to select forty (40) undergraduate students from each faculty from 100-500 levels to be selected totaling to two hundred (200) undergraduate students serving as the respondents for the study. These respondents are one hundred male and female each. A standardized questionnaire prepared by the researcher was used in collecting data for this research, the questionnaire was be closed-ended type, it comprised section A and B., the section A comprised demographic information of the respondents while section B contained the items that ask for the opinion of the respondents on the subject matter, this gave them a restricted response on a four-point modified Likert format scale type of SA-strongly agree, A-agree, D-disagree, SD-strongly disagree. A letter of introduction that was duly signed by the Head of the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education. This letter was used for the purpose of instrument administration for the selected respondents for the study. Ethical consideration for the professional integrity of the researcher was carried out using ethical consent form. The right and dignity of participants and privacy was considered. The researcher was made clear to respondents that, they are free to decide on whatever information they wish to share with the researcher and that they are under no pressure or obligation to discuss matter that they do not wish to discuss.

Then, with the help of two trained research assistants, the instrument were administered to the respondents and on the spot collection will be done where possible. The data collected was coded and analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentages for the demographic information of the respondents and analysis of research questions while inferential statistics of linear regression was used to test research hypotheses formulated and the alpha level will be set at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
	MALE	217	41.7
	FEMALE	303	58.3
	Total	520	100.0

Out of 520 respondents 217 of them are males while 303 are females

Table 2: Age of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
	16-21	163	31.3
	22-27	303	58.3
	28 and above	54	10.4
	Total	520	100.0

The table showed that over 31% of the respondents are within the age bracket 16-21 years, 58.3% were within 22-27 years while a little above 10% were 28 years and above.

Table 3: Religion of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
	Christianity	444	85.4
	Islam	64	12.3
	Traditional	12	2.3
	Total	520	100.0

The Christians (85.4%) are the most populous study respondents, followed by the Muslims (12.3%) and Traditional worshippers (12%).

Table 4: Family of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Monogamy	352	67.7
Polygamy	108	20.8
One parent	58	11.2
Orphan	2	.4
Total	520	100.0

Table four showed that over 67% of the respondents are from a monogamy family, 20.08% from polygamous homes, 11.2% from single-parent families while 0.4% are orphans.

Table 5: Faculty of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Arts	7	1.3
Education	178	34.2
Social & Management Sciences	155	29.8
Science	180	34.6
Total	520	100.0

Respondents with highest frequency are from Faculty of Science (34.6%), followed by Faculty of Education (34.2%), followed by respondents from the Faculty of Social and Management Sciences (29.8%) and the Faculty of Arts (1.3%).

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: Self-esteem is not a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Table 6: Regression summary showing relative contribution of independent variables to the prediction on the dependent variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	16.205	.490		33.069	.000
	Male	1.359	.057	.724	23.879	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

Since the t-calculated value of 33.069 at alpha level of 0.05 is greater than t -table value of 23.879. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that Self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Hypothesis 2: Self-esteem is not a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Table 7: Regression summary showing relative contribution of independent variables to the prediction on the dependent variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
1	(Constant)	16.735	.489		34.232	.000
	Female	1.454	.064	.709	22.855	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

Since the t-calculated value of 34.232 at alpha level of 0.05 is greater than t -table value of 22.855. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Hypothesis 3: Self-esteem is not a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Table 8: Regression summary showing joint contribution of independent variables to the prediction on the dependent variable

R=.580 R Square=.336 Standard Error= 2.98214 Adjusted R Square=.335					
Model	**Sum of square**	**Df**	**Mean of square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	2331.749	1	2331.749	262.197	.000
Residual	4606.643	518	8.893		
Total	6938.392	519			

Table 8 reveals that self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit; F (1, 518) = 262.197, P< 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that Self-esteem will not have a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one states that, Self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Since the t-calculated value of 33.069 at alpha level of 0.05 is greater than t -table value of 23.879. Hence, the null hypothesiswhich states that Self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. The male undergradutes, Hypothesis two also states that, Self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Since the t-calculated value of 34.232 at alpha level of 0.05 is greater than t -table value of 22.855. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that self-esteem will not have a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Hypothesis three states that, Self-esteem will not have a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. Table 8 reveals that self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit; $F(1, 518) = 262.197$, $P< 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that Self-esteem will not have a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit is rejected. It means that Self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit. This means undergraduate students that are engaged in cohabitation have low self-esteem. In a study by Sharma and Agarwala (2015), they submitted that low self-esteem is linked to anti-social behaviors. These undergraduates may believe cohabitation is not socially acceptable and this may adversely affects their self-esteem. This study was in contradiction of the study conducted by Onuoha, ilevbare & Idemudia (2018), who submitted that female undergraduates who cohabit have high self-esteem. The study further gave reasons that, high self-esteem and positive attitudes towards abortion are important predictors of cohabitation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that;

iv. Self-esteem has a significant correlation among male undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

v. Self-esteem has a significant correlation among female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

vi. Self-esteem has a significant composite correlation among male and female undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin Universirty Akungba-Akoko who cohabit.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the study recommends that;

1. This act of cohabitation should be discouraged by parents by giving close monitoring to their wards.

2. Well organised counseling and a good orientation programme will help many of these innocent students find their bearing not to misbehave and be misdirected.

3. The hostel accommodation provided by the university should be conducive and affordable for all the student, this may help to discourage cohabitation as most students who cohabits are off campus students.

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