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Factors associated with sexual behaviour among students of Uganda Martyrs University

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Abstract

In this era of HIV and AIDS, issues of sexual behaviour especially among the young people who are sexually active have become increasingly important. University students are particularly important because they live in a mixed but relatively unregulated environment, which puts them at high risk of risky sexual activity. Yet, this is the group that constitutes future leaders. This study, which was an institutional survey, aimed to establish patterns of sexual behaviour and its associated factors among students of Uganda Martyrs University. The study was guided by three objectives; to determine the patterns of sexual behaviour of University students, to establish the influence of knowledge and attitudes of University students on sexual behaviour, and to establish the influence of social demographic factors on students' sexual behavior. The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey, which was mainly quantitative in approach. Data were collected using structured self administered questionnaires. The data were collected from Uganda Martyrs University Students who are fulltime residents on campus or reside in the nearby hostels. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software version1.6 and excel computer programs while qualitative data were also analysed manually. The results showed that most students were sexually active, had started having sex before joining university, had multiple sexual partners, were mainly not using condoms and were engaging in sex under the influence of alcohol. The level of knowledge about risks involved in premarital and unprotected sex was very high and it somehow influenced students' sexual behaviour. Socio-demographic factors such as if the previous school was mixed or single sex, if parents were alive or one was a total orphan and if parents disapproved of premarital sex were associated with sexual behaviour. Religious affiliation was only related with sexual behaviour to a small degree. We suggest to the university management to introduce behaviour change communication strategies such as peer-to-peer clubs and as health promotion strategies that minimise risks of unprotected sex. Universities should also restrict alcohol in the university campus and hostels because it contributes to risky sexual behaviour. Parents and secondary school head teachers are advised to be more vigilant about children's sexual behaviour since sexual activity begin before university.

Keywords

Sexual Behavior, Sexual Debut, Multiple Sexual Partners, Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

1. Introduction

The last two decades have witnessed mushrooming of universities and higher institutions of learning in Uganda, leading to a rapid growth in student population. However, in spite of this growth, sexual and reproductive health services are not delivered in any planned and organised way. Studies outside Uganda have indicated that young people especially in universities and colleges are at a higher risk of acquiring sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV because they are inclined to be engaged in risky sexual behaviour (Mengistu, Melku, Bedada and Eticha, 2013). Studies have found that the highest group infected with HIV is the age group of 15 to 24 years where most of the university students fall (UNICEF, 2002). These findings point to a need for investigation of sexual behaviour in universities as a matter of priority. This study sought to investigate factors that influence sexual behaviour among students of Uganda Martyrs

University with a view of making evidence-based recommendations that can inform management of this and other faith-based universities in making decisions and strategies on how to address these factors.

Literature is replete with information on studies that have been conducted to address the factors that influence sexual behaviour among the youth in various parts of the world. Analysis of these studies reveals that sexual behaviour occurs within certain contexts and therefore it is important to examine the demographic, social, cultural, economic and other contextual determinants of sexuality amongst youth to enhance the knowledge of the factors that influence their sexual behaviour. For instance, Wouhabe, (2007) found that male urban youth were more likely to ever have sexual intercourse compared to the rural youth. He also found that male youth with some form of education were more likely to use condoms when compared to their counterparts without formal education. Again on the issues of context, Jaccard, Dittus and Gordon, (1996) in a study on maternal correlates of adolescent sexual and contraceptive behaviour established that teenagers who reported a low level of satisfaction with their mothers were more than twice likely to engage in premarital sexual intercourse compared to those who were highly satisfied with their relationship to their mothers. This finding was similar to the one of Forehand, et al, (2005) who observed that being in trouble at home was a primary parent - reported risk behaviour associated with youth increased odds of intending to engage in sexual intercourse.

Several studies have documented the influence of peer pressure on sexual behaviour of the youth (Hampton, McWatters, Jeffery and Smith, 2005). Unfortunately, risky as this peer influence can be, researchers have only concentrated on establishing the correlation between peer pressure and sexual behaviour without finding out the form of peer pressure that compromises the correct decisions of the youth as far as sex is concerned. It was therefore necessary to establish details of the aspects of peer influence (e.g. presence of friends with sexual experience, having friends who drink alcohol etc) that influence more significantly the sexual behaviours of the youth.

A few studies have revealed that young adults engage in premarital sex hoping to gain sexual pleasure, intimacy and social status (Ott,et al, 2006). In another study conducted among university students in Southern Ethiopia, university life was associated with engagement in sexual activities. Of the students who reported to be sexually active, 26% had their first sexual encounter after joining university life of whom, female students were 3.7 times more likely to start their sexual intercourse after joining the university than male students (Gelbo, Blachew and Tilahun, 2013). There are still gaps in literature concerning which year of study, or place of residence (on campus versus off-campus) is most associated with sexual debut and which messages could have delayed sexual intercourse among majority of the students.

A number of studies have investigated the consequences of sexual behaviour especially among university students. Further to these, there is sufficient knowledge of these consequences based on science and medicine. Aral, (2001) observed that Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), including human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) infections constitute a major reproductive health burden for sexually-active individuals. Aral, (2001) outlined consequences of STDs to include genital and other cancers, pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, infertility, and adverse outcomes of pregnancy including pre-term delivery and low birth weight. To these, Whiteside, Katz, Anthens, Boardman, et al, (2001) added chronic pelvic pain.

Other known consequences of irresponsible sexual behaviour include unwanted pregnancies, abortion, social stigma, dropping from schools etc, which often result into a serious damage to the victims' self-esteem. This in turn negatively impacts on their opportunities for individual growth as well as the growth of their families. Failure to deal with these issues, incurs a high cost to both the affected individuals and their families in terms of avoidable ill health, wasted life opportunities and social disruption. According to UNESCO (2000) providing informed choices to young people helps to promote safer sexual practices and to reduce unplanned pregnancies and STD infection rates. This in turn improves their future sexual and reproductive life and health.

The above, notwithstanding, there is still insufficient data concerning sexual life of university students in Uganda. This knowledge gap could mean that students' sexual health needs are not known, a fact that could affect the provision of their sexual and reproductive health services. This is even truer in faith-based universities, such as Uganda Martyrs University, where health care planning and delivery is based on religious expectations and values of Christian morality. In such universities, there are almost no sexual and reproductive health services for university students most of who are expected to be abstaining since they are still unmarried. As a result, there are no condoms for safe sex, no contraceptive services to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, and no reproductive health services. But are services not really required? To answer this question, it was essential to assess sexual patterns of university students on which universities could base themselves to make informed decisions concerning provision of sexual and reproductive health services to university students.

2. Goal and Objectives

The goal of this study was to establish the sexual behaviour of the university students and factors that influence it among students of Uganda Martyrs University so as to suggest evidence-based measures that can be undertaken by university management to address problems relating to sexual and reproductive health among students.

More specifically, this study was intended to achieve three main objectives:

- To determine the pattern of sexual behaviour of students of Uganda Martyrs University.
- To establish the influence of knowledge of the university students on their sexual behaviour.

- To establish the influence of socio-demographic factors on sexual behaviour of the university students.

3. Methodology

This was a descriptive, cross-sectional study that utilised mainly quantitative methods to summarise sexual behaviour and cross-tabulate aspects of sexual behaviour with some factors that could be the determinants, such as socio-demographic characteristics (age, family background, alcohol consumption) and level of knowledge of risks associated. The study was conducted in Uganda Martyrs University, which is Catholic founded and operates on faith that students heed the Christian messages and abstain from sex before marriage. However, the findings could be helpful to a number of faith-based universities in Uganda which now dominate university education in the country. No similar study was ever conducted in this university. The study population consisted of the students of Uganda Martyrs University who are full-time on the main campus and resident either on the campus itself or in the hostels around the main campus.

Sample size was calculated using a free web-based formula given by Creative Research Systems who are experts on surveys (see http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm). At a confidence level of 95%, with a sampling error of ±5, given a study population of 1,230 (resident students on main campus and nearby hostels), this formula gave a sample size of 293 students. To increase the power of the study, this sample population was increased to 370 students. A mix of probability sampling techniques was employed. We first divided the student population into years of study on Campus because sexual behaviour is likely to change as years change. Later, we stratified respondents according to faculty because people in a similar faculty might develop a culture, which could eventually influence social conduct including sexual behaviour.

Structured self administered questionnaires were used to collect the data. These were given out by the investigators themselves in order to minimise consultations among the respondents which could have generated biased responses. A box was provided at the corner of every classroom where the filled questionnaires were returned. Some sections used a five point Likert scale with response choices such as, (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Nuetral, (4) Disagree, (5) Strongly Disagree was used. The Likert format gives the respondents a variety of responses to choose from and makes it easy to tabulate the data obtained. Other sections contained yes and no options while others were for filling in very short answers.

Validity of the tools was established by computing the content validity index whose formula according to Kaplan and Saccuzo (1993) is as follows:

CVI=K/N Where by:
CVI = Content Validity Index
K = Number of items considered relevant/suitable
N = Number of items considered in the instruments
Four experts were requested to rate the instruments. The results from rating were used to compute the Content Validity Index value ratio. The CVI method is preferred because it is the most suitable validity measure for the studies using instruments like questionnaires. The researchers attained a high content validity of 0.81, and therefore proceeded to administer the instruments because this content validity was greater than 0.6, which is stipulated to be the minimum for required validity (Kaplan and Saccuzo 1993). For reliability, the questionnaire was pretested in a neighbouring university among students in a similar setting and necessary corrections undertaken on the tool. The data were mostly quantitative and analyzed using SPSS software version 16.0 to establish factors that are associated with sexual behaviour of students. To minimize errors, all the questionnaires were given serial numbers. Moreover, daily checking and entering was conducted to avoid mixing up the questionnaires.

For ethical reasons, consent was sought from the respondents before obtaining any information from them. Respondents were not required to write their names on the questionnaire as a means of ensuring confidentiality. They were told that the study is not targeting individuals but rather focusing on the general situation in the university.

4. Results

4.1. Patterns of Sexual Behaviour of University Students

The patterns of sexual behaviour of students were assessed by looking at 5 key indicators: proportion who had ever had sexual intercourse, age of sexual debut, proportion who did not use condoms last time they had sex, whether they had their first sexual experience in the university, the last time they had sex prior to the study and the number of sex partners they had.

4.1.1. Proportion of Respondents Who Had Ever Had Sexual Intercourse

As a key indicator of sexual behaviour, responses were analysed to establish the proportion of students (both males and females) who had ever been involved in sexual intercourse. The results indicated that more males (53%) had ever been involved in sexual intercourse when compared to females (47%). Overall, only a small number of students (25% of males and 27% of females) had not been involved in sexual intercourse giving an average of only 26%.

4.1.2. Age of Sexual Debut

Sexual debut refers to age at first sexual intercourse. The researchers investigated the age of sexual debut because it is a key indicator of sexual behaviour. The findings showed that among respondents who were sexually active, more males were involved in sex earlier i.e. below 15 years of age (17.3%) compared to females (5.6%). Hence, males were 3.4 times more likely to engage in sex before age 15 than females. This pattern did not change for the ages between 15 and 17 years where males who began having sex in this group constituted 27.3% against 8.1% of females. However, this pattern changed at the age of 18 and above where more females (86.3%) started

having sex compared to males (55.4%). On the whole, it is important to note that 70% of respondents had had sex for the first time at the age of 18 years and above.

4.1.3. Place of Sexual Debut

Analysis was done to establish the place where respondents had had their first sexual intercourse. It is surprising that most students had had sex before coming to the university. Those who had sex for the first time while in the university were only 48 out of a total of 263 students who had ever been involved in sex, constituting 18%. The majority (82) already had sex intercourse before coming to the university.

4.1.4. Proportion Who did not Use Condom the Last Time of Having Sex

The study considered use of condoms among the students who were sexually active as a key indicator of sexual behaviour. As shown in table 1 that follows, 70% of the males had used condoms the last time they had sex while 30% had not. On the side of females, the biggest proportion (52%) did not use a condom the last time they were involved in sex. Generally, both sexes had a considerable number that did not

use a condom the last time they had sex, which is probably the most risky form of sexual behaviour. Further analysis showed that male students were 2.5 times more likely to use condoms than female students (OR = 2.49; CI = 1.95032 – 4.1496).

Table 1. Proportion of male and female respondents who had used a condom the last time they had sex

		Sex of respondents		Total
		Male	Female	
Respondents Condom use in the last time of having sex	Yes	96 (70%)	60 (48%)	156 (60%)
	No	41 (30%)	64 (52%)	105 (40%)
Total		137 (100%)	124 (100%)	261 (100%)

4.1.5. The Last Time Respondents Had Sex Prior to the Study

Apart from condom use, the study captured the last time respondents who were sexually active had actually had sex (whether protected or not). This was regarded as a key measure of sexual behaviour. The timing was categorized into 1 week ago, 2 weeks ago, 3 to 4 weeks ago and above 4 weeks. The findings were very revealing as shown in the following table:

Table 2. showing the last time male and female respondents had sex

		The last time respondents had sex				Total
		1 week ago	2 weeks ago	3-4 weeks ago	Over a month	
Sex of respondents	Male	36 (28%)	14 (11%)	30 (23%)	50 (38%)	130
	Female	32 (27%)	16 (14%)	21 (18%)	48 (41%)	117
Total		68 (27%)	30 (12%)	51 (21%)	98 (40%)	247

The above findings show that students in the university were very sexually active. Among the male respondents, only 38% had had sex over a period of 4 weeks. This means that a huge 62% had had sex within one month when this study was conducted. Yet, majority of them were not yet married. For the females, it was only 41% who had had sex in a period exceeding one month. The majority (59%) had indulged in sex in a period less than one month. These findings indicate that university students were sexually active, contrary to what the administration and parents might be thinking.

4.1.6. The Number of Sex Partners That Each Respondent Had in Life

The questionnaire captured the number of sex partners that each respondent had as an indicator of sexual behaviour. The number of sex partners is not only a good indicator of sexual behaviour but also indicates the degree of risk facing the students since risks tend to increase with increasing numbers of sex partners. This study considered any partners exceeding 2 as multiple partners. The results of the analysis indicated that 35% of male students had 1-2 partners with a huge 65% having multiple sex partners. On the contrary, majority of the female students (68%) had 1-2 sex partners leaving a small proportion (32%) with multiple partners.

4.2. Influence of Respondents' Knowledge on Sexual Behaviour

One of the study objectives was to examine the influence of

students' knowledge on their sexual behaviour. To satisfy this objective, questions had been asked concerning respondents' awareness of the dangers of having unprotected sex and knowledge of the risks of having multiple sexual partners in predisposing someone to sexually transmitted infections. The results indicated that 92% of respondents had the required knowledge. When we further assessed if this level of knowledge influenced their sexual behaviour in respect of condom use and having multiple sex partners, we found the following results:

4.2.1. Influence of Awareness of the Dangers of Unprotected Sex on Condom Use

A cross-tabulation was done to compare respondents' awareness of the dangers of unprotected sex and condom use the "last time" of having sex. The results indicated that among the respondents who knew the dangers of unprotected sex, 60% had used condoms last time of having sex while 40% had not. Of those who did not know these dangers, again 60% had used condoms while 40% had not used condoms. However, the last category constituted only 27 people while the group that knew the dangers comprised 230 people. We can therefore say that the level of knowledge had some degree of influence on condom use since a difference of 20% constituted many students.

4.2.2. Influence of Awareness of Risks of Having Multiple Sex Partners on Sexual Behaviour

Further analysis was done to establish if awareness of the

risks of having multiple sex partners influenced respondents' sexual behaviour by limiting the number of sex partners they

were having. The findings on this relationship are summarised in the following correlation table:

Table 3. *Awareness of risks of having multiple sex partners versus number of sex partners*

Analysis of correlation between level of knowledge and multiple sexual partners		Knowledge of risks of having multiple sex partners	Number of sex partners
Knowledge of risks of having multiple sex partners	Pearson Correlation	1	-.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.408
	N	361	226
Number of sex partners	Pearson Correlation	-.055	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.408	
	N	226	229

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The above table shows some correlation of -.055 between level of knowledge and number of sex partners. As a correlation tends to negative or positive 1, it means there is a relationship between an independent and a dependent variable. This is in the middle but tending to -1. Like any negative correlations, this means that an increase in the independent variable (knowledge) leads to a decrease the dependent variable (number of sex partners).

4.3. Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors on Sexual Behaviour

In the socio-demographic factors, we examined the relationship between religious affiliations, family background, whether parents are alive and use of alcohol with sexual behaviour. The findings from this analysis were as follows:

4.3.1. Influence of Religion on Respondents' Sexual Behaviour

A cross-tabulation was done to assess the influence of religious affiliation on the frequency of sexual encounters while on university campus. The table below summarizes the findings on this:

Table 4. *Influence of religion on sexual activity among respondents while in UMU*

		Number of sex partner respondents had in life		Total
		1-2 sex partners	3 and more sex partners	
Religion	Protestant	37 (55%)	30 (45%)	67 (100.0%)
	Catholic	69 (54%)	58 (46%)	127 (100.0%)
	Moslem	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	5 (100.0%)
	Pentecostal	13 (62%)	8 (38%)	21 (100.0%)
	others	1 (13%)	7 (87%)	8 (100.0%)

The table above shows respondents' sexual activity according their religious affiliations.

It appears that mainstream religions in Uganda are associated with sexual activity in terms of limiting chances of having multiple sex partners. The 'others' who formed exception were very few and comprised smaller religions such as Jehova's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists. Generally, majority of the Catholic (54%), Protestants (55%), Moslems

(60%) and Pentecostal (62%) had only 1-2 sex partners in their entire life.

4.3.2. Influence of Parents on Respondents' Sexual Behaviour

Further analysis was done to establish any association between parents (whether both were alive or only one of them or none) and students' sexual behaviour. The following table summarises findings from this analysis:

Table 5. *Influence of parents being alive or not on students' sexual behaviour*

		Number of sex partner respondents had in life		Total
		1-2 sex partners	3 and above sex partners	
Status of the parents	Both Parents are alive	85 (54%)	73 (46%)	158 (100%)
	One parent alive	25 (45.5%)	30 (55.5%)	55 (100%)
	None alive	6 (40.0%)	9 (60%)	15 (100%)

From the table above, it appears that fewer respondents who had both parents alive (46%) had multiple sexual partners (3 and above). The number of sex partners increased among those with a single parent (55.5%) and increased more among the total orphans (60%). Hence, one could conclude that having parents can influence sexual behaviour of students.

4.3.3. Influence of Parents on Respondents' Use of Condoms

The analysis was extended to examine if having one or both parents alive had any influence on students' sensitivity about having protected sex. Results indicated that among those who had both parents alive, a whole 67% had used condom the last

time of having sex. However, among orphans, only 39% had used a condom last time of having sex. Clearly, a higher proportion of those with both parents had used condoms the last time of having sex.

4.3.4. Influence of Friends or Peers on Respondents' Sexual Behaviour

One of the social factors that could influence someone's sexual behaviour is the influence of friends. The analysis included assessment of whether having friends who took alcohol could lead one to have sex under the influence of alcohol. Results indicated that the majority of student respondents (206) admitted having friends who use either alcohol or some other drugs. And out of these, 33% had had

sex under influence of alcohol "all the time" while 66% had had sex under alcohol influence "sometimes". Together, respondents with friends who consumed alcohol they themselves had had sex under influence of alcohol were 99%. This suggests the influence of peer pressure on respondents' sexual behaviour in respect of having sex under alcohol influence.

4.3.5. Influence of Parents' Attitude or Perceived Disapproval on Sexual Behaviour

The study involved analysis of perceived approval or disapproval of parents on the students' sexual behaviour. The results of this analysis are summarised in the following table.

Table 6. Influence of perceived approval or disapproval of parents on students' sexual behaviour

Analysis of correlation between parents' attitude and students' sexual activity			
		Have you ever had sexual intercourse?	**My parents would be harsh, if learned that am involved in sex before marriage**
Have you ever had sexual intercourse?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.075
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.162
	N	354	345
My parents would be harsh, if learned that am involved in sex before marriage	Pearson Correlation	-.075	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.162	
	N	345	360

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows a strong correlation of -.075 between parents' attitude and sexual activity. As a correlation tends to negative or positive 1, it means there is a relationship between an independent and a dependent variable. This is tending to -1, which means that an increase in the independent variable (parents' attitude) leads to a decrease the dependent variable (sexual activity of students).

4.3.6. Influence of Status of Previous School on Students' Sexual Behaviour

The analysis targeted the influence of previous school on students' sexual behaviour in the University. Two broad categories were made i.e. single versus mixed schools each cross-tabulated with condom use and number of sex partners. The results showed that among the students who had attended mixed schools, a bigger proportion (63%) had used a condom the last time of having sex while among those from single schools, only 52% had used a condom. Therefore those from mixed schools were more likely to have used a condom than those from single sex schools.

A further analysis was done to see if the status of the previous school was associated with the number of sex partners, which respondents had had in life. The findings here showed that more students from mixed schools (52%) had had multiple sex partners in life compared to their counterparts from single sex schools (39%). It can therefore be said that studying from mixed schools poses higher risks of having multiple sexual partners compared to single sex schools.

5. Discussion

5.1. Patterns of Sexual Behaviour of University Students

The findings of this study revealed that majority of the students (74%) had ever been involved in sexual intercourse, with no significant differences between males and females. This implies that the vast majority of university students are sexually active. This compares with a study conducted in Wolaita Sodo University in Ethiopia where it was found out that 53.3% of respondents had ever had sexual intercourse (Gelibo, Belachew, and Tilahum, 2013). Likewise, in Haromaya University, 41% of students were found to be sexually active (Mengstu, Melku, Bedada, et al, 2013).

It is striking to find out that males are 3.4 times more likely to engage in sex before age of 15 than females even if females naturally mature earlier than males. This is not surprising given that most African families are more protective of their female children than males. That 32% of the respondents had had sex before the age of 18 compares with findings of a study conducted in Bahir Dar University where students who had had sex before age 18 were 25% (Mengstu, Melku, Bedada, et al, 2013).

It is striking to note that most students actually had had sexual intercourse before joining the university. The implication of this is that it could be difficult to stop students who already had tasted sex under strict secondary school and

family regulations in a university setting which is more liberal and free. This also could explain why many of the students had multiple sexual partners. This finding is close to the one in University of Malawi where a study found the number of students with multiple sexual partners to be 40% (Ntata, et al, 2008). A key point to note in this study is that there was a very big difference between males and females regarding the number of sexual partners, where males were 2 times more likely to have multiple sexual partners than females. In a culture which values marriage after university as the next biggest achievement, it is possible that some male students deceive several females with promises of marriage and keep them as sex partners which might explain the difference. This is unfortunate given the low condom use especially among female students. Actually, males were 2.5 times more likely to use a condom than females, which could be explained by both the scarcity of female condoms in Uganda and the cultural practice of sex in Africa which is male dominated giving females little bargaining power. That is why, a study conducted in far off Ireland among students in second-level schools in Galway City found that an equal percentage of boys and girls (72%) had used a condom the first time of having sex although this number dwindled to 67 % subsequent times (MacHale and Newell, 1997).

5.2. Association between Level of Knowledge and Sexual Behaviour

This study found that there was a high level of knowledge of the risks involved in irresponsible sexual activity. This compares very well with findings of a study that was conducted in Ghana among undergraduate university students where the level of knowledge of HIV and other STIs was established to be at 96% (Asante, 2013). In Wolaita Sodo University in Ethiopia, knowledge of HIV/AIDS was established at 60% with a high awareness of 97% (Gelibo, Belachew and Tilahun, 2013). This level of knowledge, however, was loosely associated with sexual behaviour since many students had multiple sexual partners and were not using condoms in spite of their level of knowledge. This reflects findings in Ghana (Kwaku, 2013) where over 90% of university students were knowledgeable about benefits of HIV testing and where to test from but only 45% had tested for HIV. It therefore appears that there are other factors apart from knowledge that influence students' sexual behaviour. Further analysis was therefore undertaken to assess the role of social demographic factors and how they relate to sexual behaviour.

5.3. Social Demographic Factors and Students' Sexual Behaviour

One social factor that could influence behaviour is religion. Tenkorang and Owusu (2010) have quoted extensive literature showing the impact of religion on sexual lifestyles. This study, however, did not find such a strong relationship as students in all Christian religious faiths had at least 40% or more having had multiple sexual partners. In this case, this study agrees with those cited above which found out that the extent to which

religion influences behaviour depends on the type of teaching in particular Churches and the degree of personal commitment.

The cross-tabulation between the status of parents (whether both were alive, one alive or both dead) and number of students' sexual partners shows clear differences between those who had either both parents or one parent alive or none alive. The parents' presence clearly influences the number of sex partners where those with one or no parents are more likely to have multiple partners. Studies, however, have shown that it is not only the presence of parents but their approval or disapproval that influences children's sexual behaviour (Jaccard, and Dittus, 1991). Indeed in this research, it came out that of those who used condoms, majority had both parents alive while only 39% had one parent alive. And of those who said that their parents would be harsh if they knew they had engaged in premarital sex, majority had used a condom the last time of having sex.

Having peers that use alcohol was found to be associated with having sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol. Out of those respondents that agreed to having friends who consume alcohol, 99% had had sex under the influence of alcohol either all the time or some times. It is only 1% that had never had sex under influence of alcohol at all. This finding concurs with a study that was conducted in Wolaita Sodo University in Ethiopia where a significant association was found between alcohol intake and sexual activity (Gelbo, Belachew and Tilahun, 2013). Another similar finding was found in a study on risk of HIV infection among persons with severe mental illnesses where an association was established between alcohol consumption and increased risk of unprotected sex (Carey, Carey and Kalichman, (1997).

The findings further revealed a relationship between status of the previous school and the number of sexual partners a respondent had had in life. Of the respondents who had multiple sex partners, a smaller proportion was previously in a single sex school while majority were from mixed schools. In fact, mixed schools were about 4 times more likely to expose young people to sex than single sex schools. It was also established that those who went to mixed schools were over 5 times more likely to have multiple sexual partners than those from day schools. There is need to further investigate the control and regulation mechanisms in the mixed secondary schools to establish what is actually going on that is exposing the students therein to sexual activity.

6. Conclusions

This study shows that several university students have ever had sexual intercourse. Likewise, the frequency of sexual intercourse and number of sexual partners are high among university students, which calls for policy measure to address this scenario. The study also reveals that more university students had their first sexual experience outside the university, contrary to the thinking that students begin sexual intercourse in universities because of the laxity in regulations and more freedoms. Yet, this study also shows that condom use is generally limited among university students with fewer

females having had sex with condoms than males. The implication is that sex is still a male dominated activity and the scarcity of female condoms could be worsening the matter.

Since a greater majority of students (both males and females) had consented to sexual intercourse the first time of having sex, we can conclude that policies to dissuade students from having sex should include sex education and behaviour change communication techniques rather than just rules and regulations. The other conclusion is that although students are knowledgeable about risks involved in unprotected sex, many still engage in risky sexual activities. However, knowledge still has some influence on sexual behaviour because of the marked differences in sexual activity between students with differing levels of knowledge.

There was a clear relationship between sexual behaviour and having either one or both parents alive. The findings point to a conclusion that total orphanage increases one's risks of being involved in premarital sex. It also increases the chances of getting involved in unprotected sex.

Finally, we can also conclude that peers have an influence on students' sexual practices since most of those whose friends were using alcohol had ever had sexual intercourse under influence of alcohol. A related key conclusion from this study was that almost all students had had sex under the influence of alcohol, which calls for interventions not only on sexual activity but on alcohol availability, accessibility and use within and around university campus.

Recommendations

Basing on study findings, management of faith-based universities needs to appreciate that students are sexually active and therefore put in place sexual and reproductive health services for the student community to prevent unwanted pregnancies, STIs (including HIV/AIDS) and possible criminal abortions with all their complications. They could create health promotion activities that can create behaviour change such as peer-to-peer clubs since sexual promiscuity is also peer-related. They also need to put in place regulations to restrict alcohol consumption and drug misuse in and around the campus. This measure should involve banning alcohol consumption within the campus halls of residence and in the hostels housing university students.

Parents of students need to show strictness and open disapproval of their children's sexual activities as these have been proved to be related to students' sexual behaviour. They should monitor their children, not only females as is in many African cultures, but also males since males engage in sexual activity much earlier than females but also do have more sexual partners than females. The issue of thinking that males do not get pregnant is now irrelevant since they can also acquire HIV, which is even more dangerous than pregnancy.

Finally, the leadership of secondary schools needs to intensify mixed measures including regulation, protection (e.g. fencing the schools and dormitories to restrict access), training in life skills and sensitization of students and their parents about causes and consequences of premarital sex. This is because students engage in sex before joining university. Leaders of mixed schools need to be more vigilant since students from such schools are more likely to have multiple sex partners and not to use condoms. Frequent checks such as pregnancy tests, restriction of use of mobile phones among students and instant expulsion of students (both boys and girls) caught in premarital sex or love affairs should be encouraged to ensure that mixed schools are not a training ground for premarital sex.

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