

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF-CONCEPT AS
CORRELATES OF ADOLESCENTS' SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AMONG
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION (SP) AFFILIATED TO UNIVERSITY OF
IBADAN OYO NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in how adolescents manage peer pressure, a significant factor influencing their sexual behaviour. Adolescents with well-developed emotional intelligence may possess better skills in asserting themselves, resisting negative peer influences, and making decisions aligned with their values and well-being. This study investigated the relationships between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria. The research employed a descriptive survey design and utilized a sample of 100 undergraduate students from the University of Ibadan, Faculty of Education (UI-FCES). Emotional intelligence and self-concept were assessed using adapted questionnaires, and sexual behavior was measured through self-report. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior ($r = 0.109, p = 0.03$). However, no significant correlation was found between self-concept and sexual behavior ($r = 0.1284, p = 0.35$). Furthermore, the combined relationship of emotional intelligence and self-concept did not significantly predict sexual behavior ($F = 0.921, p = 0.402$). The results highlight the complexity of factors influencing sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates and underscore the need for further research to identify key determinants of responsible sexual behavior. The study contributes to the understanding of the relationships between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and sexual behavior, and has implications for the development of interventions and educational programs aimed at promoting responsible sexual behavior among young adults in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Emotion, Emotional Intelligence, Self Concept, Sexual Behaviour, and Adolescent.*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent sexual behaviour is a complex and multidimensional issue that has significant implications for the physical, emotional, and social well-being of young people. Nigeria, a country in West Africa, grapples with complex issues related to adolescent sexual behaviour. The prevalence of early sexual initiation, inconsistent contraceptive use, and the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among Nigerian adolescents is a pressing concern (UNICEF, 2020). A study by Izugbara and Undie (2008) highlighted those cultural norms, peer influence, and limited sexual education contribute to risky sexual behaviours among Nigerian adolescents. Understanding the factors underlying this behaviour is critical for developing targeted interventions. Understanding the factors that influence adolescents' sexual behaviour is also crucial for developing effective interventions and promoting sexual health among this population.

One important factor that has been found to be associated with adolescents' sexual behaviour is emotional intelligence (EI). Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others (Resurrección et al., 2014). Research has shown that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with better mental health outcomes and lower levels of psychological maladjustment in adolescence (Resurrección et al., 2014; Davis & Humphrey, 2012). Emotional intelligence also play a role in shaping adolescents' sexual behaviour by influencing their ability to make informed decisions, manage peer pressure, and navigate intimate relationships (Cherie & Berhane, 2012).

The relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behaviour among adolescents is a nuanced and multifaceted one. Emotional intelligence may influence adolescents' sexual behaviour by enhancing their ability to make informed decisions in the realm of intimate relationships (Cherie & Berhane, 2012). Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence may be more adept at understanding and managing their emotions in the context of romantic relationships, leading to more thoughtful and informed decisions regarding their sexual behaviour. This ability to navigate complex emotional scenarios is particularly pertinent in the context of intimate relationships and sexual decision-making.

Emotional intelligence also plays a pivotal role in how adolescents manage peer pressure, a significant factor influencing their sexual behaviour. Adolescents with well-developed emotional intelligence may possess better skills in asserting themselves, resisting negative peer influences, and making decisions aligned with their values and well-being (Cherie & Berhane, 2012). The capacity to understand and regulate one's emotions contributes to a heightened ability to navigate social pressures and make choices that align with one's personal values and boundaries in the realm of sexual behaviour.

The process of making informed decisions about sexual behaviour involves a complex interplay of emotions, interpersonal dynamics, and individual values. Emotional intelligence equips adolescents with the skills necessary for effective communication, empathy, and self-awareness, all of which are crucial components of healthy intimate relationships (Cherie & Berhane, 2012). The ability to understand one's emotions and effectively communicate with a partner fosters an environment where mutual consent, respect, and shared decision-making can occur. Thus, emotional intelligence contributes to the development of a foundation for positive and consensual sexual experiences among adolescents.

Another factor that may be related to adolescents' sexual behaviour is self-concept. Self-concept refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that individuals have about themselves (O'Sullivan et al., 2006). Self-concept pertains to individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about themselves. Adolescents' self-concept can significantly impact their sexual behaviour. A positive self-concept is often linked to healthier sexual decision-making and self-esteem, which may affect adolescents' choices related to sexual activity (Ojanen et al., 2012). Research has shown that self-concept is an important predictor of adolescents' emotional well-being and can influence their behaviours and choices (Martínez-Montegudo et al., 2019). Specifically, a positive self-concept may be associated with healthier sexual behaviours, while a negative self-concept may be associated with risky sexual behaviours (Rostosky et al., 2008).

In addition to emotional intelligence and self-concept, other factors such as peer pressure, sex education, and media influence may also play a role in shaping adolescents' sexual behaviour (Cherie & Berhane, 2012; Aderemi, 2019; Asekun-Olarinmoye et al., 2014). Peer pressure has been identified as a significant driver of risky sexual behaviours among adolescents (Cherie & Berhane, 2012). Sex education provided by parents and peers has also been found to be associated with adolescents' sexual risk behaviour (Aderemi, 2019). Furthermore, the influence of mass media and the internet on shaping the sexual attitudes and behaviours of young people is of public health concern (Asekun-Olarinmoye et al., 2014).

Peer pressure stands out as a significant influence on adolescents' sexual behaviour, often driving risky behaviours (Cherie & Berhane, 2012). Adolescents, in their quest for social acceptance and belonging, may succumb to the influence of peers, leading to decisions that they might not have made independently. The pressure to conform to perceived norms within peer groups can result in engaging in sexual activities without adequate knowledge or consideration of the potential consequences. Understanding the dynamics of peer influence is crucial for devising interventions that empower adolescents to resist negative pressures and make informed decisions about their sexual health.

Sex education, delivered by both parents and peers, is another influential factor in shaping adolescents' sexual behaviours (Aderemi, 2019). The knowledge and attitudes adolescents acquire about sex from these sources can significantly impact their decisions and behaviours. A comprehensive and accurate sex education can empower adolescents with the information needed to make responsible choices regarding their sexual health. On the other hand, inadequate or misinformation may contribute to risky sexual behaviours. Thus, promoting effective sex education becomes a critical component of interventions aimed at positively influencing adolescents' sexual behaviour.

The influence of mass media and the internet on shaping the sexual attitudes and behaviours of young people is an area of public health concern (Asekun-Olarinmoye et al., 2014). Media platforms often portray sexuality in ways that may not align with healthy and responsible sexual behaviours. Exposure to explicit content, unrealistic portrayals of relationships, and the glorification of risky behaviours can contribute to distorted perceptions and misguided expectations. Recognizing the impact of media on adolescents' sexual attitudes is essential for developing media literacy programs and interventions that foster a more realistic and responsible understanding of sexuality.

Research specifically addressing emotional intelligence and self-concept in Oyo State is limited. While there is a growing interest in emotional intelligence and self-concept in Nigerian academic and professional settings, studies examining these factors in the context of adolescents' sexual behaviour are scarce. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by focusing on Oyo State and investigating how emotional intelligence and self-concept may relate to the sexual behaviour of undergraduates.

Statement of the Problem.

Adolescent sexual behaviour is a multifaceted issue with far-reaching implications for public health, individual well-being, and societal development. In Oyo State, Nigeria, as in many parts of the world, there is growing concern over the increasing prevalence of risky sexual behaviours among adolescents and undergraduates. These behaviours include early sexual initiation, inconsistent contraceptive use, and the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (UNICEF, 2020). The implications of such behaviours are significant, including unintended pregnancies, STIs, emotional and psychological distress, and potential harm to the overall development and future prospects of adolescents.

Despite the acknowledged challenges posed by these behaviours, there is a notable gap in research that delves into the underlying factors contributing to these trends, particularly with a focus on emotional intelligence and self-concept. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a complex construct that encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively. It has been linked to decision-making processes and behaviour in various contexts (Mavroveli et al., 2007). Self-concept, on the other hand, is an individual's perception of themselves, encompassing beliefs, attitudes, and self-esteem. Both emotional intelligence and self-concept play a fundamental role in shaping adolescents' decision-making processes.

The primary problem addressed by this research is the need to understand the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and the sexual behaviour of adolescents and undergraduates in Oyo State, as well as the implications for public health and education. The study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of these factors to inform evidence-based interventions and policies that promote healthier sexual decision-making among this population.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate and understand the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and the sexual behaviour of adolescents and undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were stated and tested at 0.05 level of significance; they are:

H01: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the sexual behaviour of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

H02: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and the sexual behaviour of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

H03: There is no significant combined relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept in influencing the sexual behaviour of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research design, this was considered appropriate as the researcher collected information through the use of questionnaires to sample the opinion of the respondents.

The population of the study comprised all the undergraduate UI-FCES students

Sample and Sampling Techniques

This research made use of a sample of Hundred (100) students. The sample consisted of both male and female Undergraduates who were randomly selected across Department in the selected institution. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 25 students each for all levels (100L to 400L).

Instrumentation

The researcher made use of two instrument scale

Emotional Intelligence:

Emotional intelligence was assessed using a questionnaire adapted from the seminal work of Mayer and Salovey (2015). This instrument aimed to capture participants' abilities to recognize and understand their own emotions. The items were selected based on their relevance to the study's focus on emotional intelligence in the context of adolescents' sexual behaviour.

The questionnaire included twelve items, each designed to explore different facets of emotional intelligence. Participants were asked to rate their responses on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 4 ('strongly agree').

Self-Concept Scale:

Self-concept was assessed using items adapted from Rosenberg's (2014) Self-Esteem Scale. This instrument focused on participants' overall self-esteem and the extent to which their self-concept influenced decisions related to sexual activities. The adapted questionnaire aimed to capture the nuanced aspects of self-concept relevant to the study's context.

Again, four Likert-type scale items were employed, allowing participants to express their agreement or disagreement with statements.

Method of data analysis

The analysis of the data for the study was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive statistic (frequency count and percentage) was used to organize and describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents, while inferential statistic Pearson's Product correlation coefficient (PPMC), was used to determine the degree of correlation between the variables and ANOVA

Result

Demographic Information of Respondents

The personal characteristics of the respondents such as Gender, Age, and Level, are presented in the table below.

Demographic Information of the Respondents by Sex

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Male	42	42.0
Female	58	58.0
Total	100	100

According to the demographic information presented in **Table above**, the study included 100 respondents, of which 42 (42.0%) were male and 58 (58.0%) were female. The data shows a slightly higher representation of female respondents than male respondents in the study.

Demographic Information of the Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
18-20years	19	19.0
21-23years	37	37.0
24-26years	28	28.0
27 and above	16	16.0
Total	100	100

The study included respondents from various age groups. The majority of the respondents, 37 (37.0%), belonged to the age group of 21-23 years. The second largest group was the 24-26 years age group, with 28 respondents (28.0%). The 18-20 years age group had 19 respondents (19.0%), while the smallest group was the 27 years and above, with 16 respondents (16.0%). The total number of respondents in the study was 100

The table titled "Demographic Information of the Respondents by Marital Status" presents data on the marital status of the respondents.

There were a total of 100 respondents surveyed.

Out of the 100 respondents:

- 90 were single, making up 90% of the respondents
- 10 were married, making up 10% of the respondents
- 0 fell into the "Others" marital status category, making up 0% of the respondents

So the vast majority (90%) of the 100 respondents were single, while only 10% were married. No respondents fell outside of the single or married categories.

Demographic Information of the Respondents by Level of Study

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Single	90	90.0
Married	10	10.0
Others	0	0.0
Total	100	100

The table titled "Demographic Information of the Respondents by Level" presents data on the academic levels of the 100 respondents surveyed.

Out of the total 100 respondents:

- 20 respondents were at the 100L level, making up 20% of the total
- 11 respondents were at the 200L level, making up 11% of the total
- 22 respondents were at the 300L level, making up 22% of the total
- 47 respondents were at the 400L level, forming the largest group at 47% of the total

So nearly half (47%) of the 100 respondents were at the 400L level, while the 300L level made up the next largest group at 22%. The 100L and 200L levels made up the smaller portions at 20% and 11% respectively.

Test of Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses stated in chapter one of this study are hereby tested using PPMC as a statistical tool to validate the findings of the study.

The following Hypotheses are tentative statements of truth put forward as a basis for further investigation by which they may be approved or disapproved.

H01: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the sexual behavior of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

N	X	Y	Mean of X	Mean of Y	r-value	P-value	Decision
100	3689	1323	36.89	13.23	0.109	0.03	Rejected H0

Based on the SPSS output, we can conclude that there is a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.109$) between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior among the sample of 100 adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State. The p-value (0.030) suggests that this correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, meaning that there is a low probability that this correlation occurred by chance alone.

With a sample size of 100, we have a more reliable basis for drawing conclusions compared to the previous example with a smaller sample size. The larger sample size increases the stability and generalizability of the findings.

Given the statistically significant correlation and the adequate sample size, we can reject the null hypothesis (H01) and conclude that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State. However, it is essential to note that while the correlation is statistically significant, the strength of the relationship is weak ($r = 0.109$). This means that although there is a significant association between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior, the relationship is not strong, and other factors may also play a role in influencing sexual behavior among this population.

In conclusion, based on the provided data and the SPSS output, we reject the null hypothesis (H01) and conclude that there is a significant, albeit weak, relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State.

H02: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and the sexual behavior of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

N	X	Y	Mean of X	Mean of Y	r-value	P-value	Decision
100	2484	1323	24.84	13.23	0.1284	0.35	Accepted H_0

Based on the SPSS output, we can observe that there is a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.128$) between self-concept and sexual behavior among the sample of 100 adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State. However, the p-value (0.356) suggests that this correlation is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, meaning that there is a high probability that this correlation occurred by chance alone.

With a sample size of 100, we have a reasonably good basis for drawing conclusions. The non-significant p-value indicates that the observed correlation between self-concept and sexual behavior could be due to random chance rather than a true relationship in the population.

Given the non-significant correlation and the adequate sample size, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H02) and conclude that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State.

It is important to note that the absence of a statistically significant relationship does not necessarily mean that there is no association between self-concept and sexual behavior. It simply means that based on the current data and the chosen significance level (0.05), we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that the relationship is significant.

In conclusion, based on the provided data and the SPSS output, we accept the null hypothesis (H02) and conclude that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State.

H03: There is no significant combined relationship between emotional intelligence and self-concept in influencing the sexual behavior of adolescent's undergraduates in Oyo State.

SUMMARY OUTPUT	
Multiple R	0.1365054945
R Square	0.01863375002
Adjusted R Square	-0.001600605647
Standard Error	3.866555943
Observations	100

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	2	27.53527875	13.76763937	0.9208966337	0.4016143573
Residual	97	1450.174721	14.95025486		
Total	99	1477.71			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>
Intercept	7.533833 405	4.31874 8104	1.74444 8443	0.084248 44398	1.03768 5878	16.1053 5269	1.03768 5878	16.1053 5269
Self concept	0.142392 1372	0.17421 83531	0.81731 99593	0.415748 588	0.20338 30589	0.48816 73334	0.20338 30589	0.48816 73334
Emotional Intelligence	0.058529 30079	0.12672 19358	0.46187 18963	0.645207 4108	0.19297 86571	0.31003 72586	0.19297 86571	0.31003 72586

The regression model summary shows that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.137, indicating a weak linear relationship between the predictors (self-concept and emotional intelligence) and the dependent variable (sexual behavior). The R-squared value of 0.019 suggests that only 1.9% of the variance in sexual behavior can be explained by the combination of self-concept and emotional intelligence.

The ANOVA table assesses the overall significance of the regression model. With an F-value of 0.921 and a p-value (Sig.) of 0.402, which is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we conclude that the regression model is not statistically significant. This means that the combination of self-concept and emotional intelligence does not significantly predict sexual behavior.

The coefficients table presents the individual contributions of each predictor variable to the regression model. For self-concept, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.142, with a p-value of 0.416, indicating that self-concept is not a significant predictor of sexual behavior when controlling for emotional intelligence. Similarly, emotional intelligence has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.059 and a p-value of 0.645, suggesting that it is not a significant predictor of sexual behavior when controlling for self-concept.

Discussion of Findings

The present study aimed to investigate the relationships between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings of this research contribute to the existing body of knowledge in this field and provide insights into the factors influencing the sexual behavior of young adults.

Emotional Intelligence and Sexual Behavior The results of this study revealed a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior among the sample of adolescent undergraduates. This finding suggests that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with more responsible sexual behavior. However, the strength of the relationship indicates that other factors also play a role in shaping sexual behavior.

These findings align with previous research by Ugoji (2014), who found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior among university students in Nigeria. Similarly, a study by Bayrami et al. (2012) in Iran demonstrated that individuals with higher emotional intelligence reported more responsible sexual attitudes and behavior. However, it is important to note that the weak correlation found in the present study suggests that emotional intelligence alone does not fully explain sexual behavior. Other researchers, such as Kaur and Zaky (2015), have emphasized the complex nature of sexual behavior and the multitude of factors that influence it, including social, cultural, and psychological factors.

Self-Concept and Sexual Behavior Regarding the relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior, the present study found no significant correlation among the sample of adolescent undergraduates. This finding indicates that self-concept may not be a significant predictor of sexual behavior in this population.

This result is in contrast to some previous research, such as a study by Salami and Aremu (2006), which found a significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior among adolescents in Nigeria. However, the present study's findings are consistent with research by Odimegwu and Somefun (2017), who found no significant association between self-concept and risky sexual behavior among Nigerian youth.

The absence of a significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior in the present study suggests that other factors may be more influential in shaping sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State. These factors could include peer influence, family background, religious beliefs, and access to sexual health education (Isiugo-Abanihe & Oyediran, 2004; Okonkwo et al., 2005).

Combined Relationship of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Concept on Sexual Behavior
The present study also investigated the combined relationship of emotional intelligence and self-concept in influencing sexual behavior. The regression analysis revealed that the combination of these two variables did not significantly predict sexual behavior among the sample of adolescent undergraduates.

This finding suggests that the interaction between emotional intelligence and self-concept may not be a significant determinant of sexual behavior in this population. It is possible that other variables, such as those mentioned above, play a more substantial role in shaping sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State.

Thus, the present study contributes to the understanding of the relationships between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings highlight the weak but significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior, the lack of a significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior, and the non-significant combined influence of emotional intelligence and self-concept on sexual behavior.

These results underscore the complexity of factors influencing sexual behavior and the need for further research to identify and understand the key determinants of responsible sexual behavior among young adults in Nigeria. The findings also have implications for the development of interventions and educational programs aimed at promoting responsible sexual behavior and reducing risky sexual practices among adolescent undergraduates.

Conclusion

The present study contributes to the understanding of the relationships between emotional intelligence, self-concept, and sexual behavior among adolescent undergraduates in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings highlight the complexity of factors influencing sexual behavior and the need for further research to identify and understand the key determinants of responsible sexual behavior among young adults in Nigeria.

The weak but significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual behavior suggests that emotional intelligence may play a role in promoting responsible sexual behavior. However, the lack of a significant relationship between self-concept and sexual behavior indicates that self-concept may not be a crucial factor in shaping sexual behavior among this population. The non-significant combined influence of emotional intelligence and self-concept on sexual behavior underscores the need to explore other factors that may have a more substantial impact on sexual behavior.

The study's findings have implications for the development of interventions and educational programs aimed at promoting responsible sexual behavior and reducing risky sexual

practices among adolescent undergraduates. These interventions should consider the role of emotional intelligence while also addressing other relevant factors that may influence sexual behavior, such as peer influence, family background, religious beliefs, and access to sexual health education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational institutions should incorporate emotional intelligence training into their curricula to help students develop the skills necessary for making responsible decisions, including those related to sexual behavior.
2. Sexual health education programs should be designed to address the specific needs and challenges faced by adolescent undergraduates, taking into account the cultural, social, and religious contexts in which they live.
3. Further research should be conducted to identify and understand the key determinants of responsible sexual behavior among young adults in Nigeria, including factors such as peer influence, family background, religious beliefs, and access to sexual health education.
4. Collaboration between educational institutions, healthcare providers, and community organizations should be encouraged to develop comprehensive and multi-faceted interventions that promote responsible sexual behavior and reduce risky sexual practices among adolescent undergraduates.
5. Policymakers should prioritize the development and implementation of evidence-based policies and programs that address the sexual and reproductive health needs of young adults in Nigeria, with a focus on promoting responsible sexual behavior and reducing the prevalence of risky sexual practices.

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