



**TRENDS IN SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR  
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL  
ADOLESCENTS IN IBADAN**

**I.O. AKINYELE and I.O. ONIFADE**





---

# Trends in social behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Ibadan

Isaac Oluwaluwa Akinyele and I.O. Onifade

---

DOI: 10.4000/books.ifra.3480  
Publisher: IFRA-Nigeria, University of Ibadan  
Place of publication: Ibadan  
Year of publication: 1996  
Publication date: 28 janvier 2022  
Series: African Dynamics  
Digital ISBN: 979-10-92312-64-5



<https://books.openedition.org>

## Print edition

ISBN (Print version): 978-978-2015-40-2  
Number of pages: v-33

## DIGITAL REFERENCE

Akinyele, Isaac Oluwaluwa, and I.O. Onifade. *Trends in Social Behaviour Among Secondary School Adolescents in Ibadan*. IFRA-Nigeria, University of Ibadan, 1996, <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.ifra.3480>.

---

This text was automatically generated on 3 mai 2024.

The PDF format is issued under the Licence OpenEdition Books unless otherwise stated.

The ePub format is issued under the Licence OpenEdition Books unless otherwise stated.

## EXCERPT

Results from this study show that adolescents in Nigeria are becoming more involved in undesirable activities such as cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, drug abuse and pre-marital sex. As a result, teenagers are presenting with many sexually related diseases and problems associated with unhealthy activities. Teenage mothers are a social liability to national development and progress; the education of the young mother has to be stopped even temporarily; she may be forced into an early marriage, which may end her formal education completely; this may affect her earning capacity and her ability to cater for her child. Early pregnancy can also compromise the future reproductive capacity of a young woman.

ISAAC ỌLAOLUWA AKINYELE

Food Basket Foundation International

I.O. ONIFADE

Food Basket Foundation International

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### *List of tables*

### *Acknowledgements*

### *Introduction*

Background to the study

### *Objectifs of the study*

Target groups

Methodology

### *Results*

Findings with respect to girls

Findings concerning boys

### *Discussion*

Girls

Boys

### *Conclusions and recommendations*

### *References*

# List of tables

p. IV

---

1	Sample frame of schools surveyed
2	Age of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
3	Party attendance among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
4	Duration of stay at parties by adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
5	How adolescents attend parties #6
6	Smoking habits of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
7	Alcohol consumption by adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
8	Girls in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have boyfriends
9	Boys in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have girlfriends
10	Age at onset of having boyfriends/girlfriends among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
11	Factors influencing the decision to have a boyfriend/girlfriend among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
12	Factors influencing decision to have sexual intercourse among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
13	Age at first sexual intercourse for adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
14	Numbers of sexual partners for adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
15	Sexual behaviour of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
16	Friends of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have had sexual intercourse

17	Awareness of cases of pregnant students among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
18	Cases of pregnancy among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
19	Fate of pregnancies of girls in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
20	Awareness and use of contraceptives among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
21	Sources of information on contraception among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan
22	Awareness of and types of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

# Acknowledgements

p. v

---

- 1 Food Basket Foundation wishes to express its appreciation to Professor Georges Hernaut, Director of IFRA Ibadan, who provided financial support for the field work and the publication of the study. His interest and encouragement were factors which ensured the completion of the study especially during the adverse political environment which existed in Ibadan at the time of the survey.
- 2 The efforts of the research team of the Food Basket Foundation, as well as the support staff are also acknowledged.

# Introduction

p. 1-2

---

## Background to the study

- 1 Juvenile delinquency among youths is a subject of great concern to government and society. Some of the problems manifested include teenage pregnancy, abortion, and drug and alcohol addiction. Unless these problems are addressed, there may be a complete breakdown of our cultural values.
- 2 The social behaviour of youths in a particular community is influenced by a number of factors which include family background, peer group pressure, media influences (*copycat* behaviour), the economic situation of the family, and the educational background of the parents. However, education stands out as a major factor that influences behaviour and that can be used to effect behaviour modification in youths and in the society as a whole. With improved education, various aspects of family life are handled better, facilitating a rise in the general living standards of the family.
- 3 Factors have been identified, which affect the proper education of youths, particularly girls; these include socio-cultural beliefs (especially in rural areas) which may discriminate against female education. Other factors include peer group influences, increasing sexual awareness, substance abuse, truancy, teenage pregnancies and abortions. These finally lead to the increasing wastage rates in schools. The problem of inadequate number of teachers and incessant strike action are also important factors contributing to the increasing wastage rates.
- 4 An important point to bear in mind when addressing educational issues is the socio-economic milieu in which the education is provided. As long as children are used in non-educational activities to supplement parents' incomes, the opportunity cost of schooling is difficult to justify. This explains the current situation in Nigeria where parents would rather have their children hawk goods or work on the farm in order to increase the household's income, rather than send them to school.
- 5 At present, there is very little encouragement to send children to school. School and examination fees and the cost of textbooks are beyond the reach of the average Nigerian family. Transportation costs are relatively high, as a result of the recent hike



in fuel prices, which has also led to across the board increases in prices of almost everything. The education system is on the verge of collapse because of strikes. Teachers are not paid regularly and many of them are not dedicated. The result is that parents have to pay for extra lessons to get their children through examinations. All these culminate in high dropout rates.

- 6 A high dropout rate due to teenage pregnancy is a serious problem because it has a multiplier effect. Teenage mothers lack the financial and emotional base for adequate child care. Teenage mothers who come from poor or single parent (mother) homes are worse off. Being poor and having little or no access to education increases the chances of this scenario being repeated in her own children. Besides this, adolescent pregnancy can cause serious health problems. Reports have been made on the high incidence of abortion, pre-eclampsia, prenatal mortality, antepartum haemorrhage as well as diseases like anaemia and jaundice.
- 7 Factors which contribute to the increasing sexual activity among adolescents include, early initiation into sexual activities, early onset of menstruation (menarche), lack of information about human reproduction, lack of counselling and the breakdown of traditional moral values. Parents generally assume that their adolescent children are not sexually active. However, the lack of communication on this sensitive issue can cause pregnant teenagers to take drastic measures which could be fatal.
- 8 Government and non government organizations should make the special needs of adolescents a priority and make health facilities available to adolescents, particularly girls. This may safeguard their fertility and ensure their effective contribution to the development of the nation.

# Objectifs of the study

p. 3-4

---

- 1 The broad objective of this study was to collect baseline information on current trends in the social behaviour of secondary school students.

## Target groups

- 2 Secondary schools were selected within Ibadan municipality, from Ibadan North East, Ibadan South East, and Ibadan South West local government areas (table 1).

Table 1. Sample frame of schools surveyed

	Name of School	LGA
1.	Queen of Apostles, Oluyoro	Ibadan NE
2.	Loyola College, Ibadan	"
3.	Holy Trinity, Old Ife Road	"
4.	Renascent High School, Aremo	"I
5.	Ibadan Grammar School, Molete	Ibadan SE
6.	St. Anne's School, Molete	"
7.	Yejide Girls' Grammar School, Molete	"
8.	Wesley College of Science, Elekuro	"
9.	Eyini High School, Old Lagos Road	"
10.	St. Theresa's College, Oke Ado	Ibadan SW
11.	Queens School, Apata	"

12.	Baptist Secondary School, Oke Ado	"
13.	Baptist Grammar School, Idi Ishin	"
14.	Oluoyole High School, Ring Road	"
15.	Oke Ado High School, Oke Ado	"
16.	Community High School, Elewura	"
17.	Urban Day Grammar School	"

- 3 In most of the schools surveyed, all the students in the senior secondary classes participated with the exception of a few schools where the senior student population was very large. In such cases the students were randomly selected to obtain a fair representation of the student population. Both mixed and girls schools were surveyed.
- 4 Primary groups targeted included
  1. Adolescent boys and girls in senior secondary classes
  2. School principals
  3. Guidance counsellors
  4. Home economics teachers

## Methodology

- 5 A participatory approach was used to collect information from the primary target groups. Focused group discussion sessions, in-depth interview sessions and structured questionnaires were the instruments used.
- 6 The study started in the third week of June, 1994. Preliminary visits to schools and a pretest of study instruments were carried out during the first and second weeks. The study was subsequently carried out and the questionnaires were administered with the assistance of the guidance counsellors in the schools. A total of three thousand three hundred and fifty-five questionnaires were administered.

# Results

p. 4-27

- 1 The results are presented in tabular form, and give the relevant data on the education of girls and current trends in their social behaviour in relation to their attitudes towards boys, sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases.

## Findings with respect to girls

- 2 The majority of the girls surveyed were between the ages of 15 and 18 (table 2). It was found that 78 per cent of the girls in mixed and 85 per cent of those in all-girls schools attended various parties (table 3). Parties are a social setting and provide the opportunity for many adolescents to be exposed to undesirable activities.

Table 2. Age of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Age	Girls (all-girls schools)		Girls (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)		Boys (mixed schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
10	1	0.07	2	0.03	0	0.00	2	0.2
11	1	0.07	0	0.00	1	0.40	1	0.1
12	10	0.87	2	0.30	1	0.04	1	0.1
13	40	3.47	6	0.08	1	0.40	12	1.0
14	116	10.07	18	2.30	5	2.20	21	2.0
15	232	20.14	79	10.30	26	11.20	92	3.0
16	326	28.38	182	23.70	97	41.40	286	24.0
17	236	20.49	211	27.40	74	32.00	352	29.6
18	129	11.20	170	22.10	28	12.00	263	22.0
19	35	3.04	63	8.20	-	-	106	9.0
20	17	1.48	13	1.70	-	-	30	2.0
21	2	0.17	2	0.30	-	-	8	0.6
22	0	0.00	0	0.00	-	-	2	0.2
23	0	0.00	0	0.00	-	-	1	0.1
24	0	0.00	0	0.00	-	-	1	0.1
No response	7	0.61	28	3.60	-	-	13	1.0



Table 3. Party attendance among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Attend	Girls (all-girls schools)		Girls (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)		Boys (mixed schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	983	85	578	75	200	85	896	75
No	137	12	155	20	23	10	219	19
No response	36	3	43	5	10	4	72	6

- 3 For example, it is during parties that many students are introduced to alcohol and keeping late hours. In fact, 8 per cent and 5 per cent of the girls in mixed and in all-girls schools respectively (table 4) admitted to staying overnight at parties. It is a mistake on the part of parents and guardians to allow their wards to stay overnight at parties. Cases of rape, exposure to drugs and lacing of drinks with drugs were reported by some of the students during the survey.

Table 4. Duration of stay at parties by adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Duration	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Up to 2hrs	258	33	429	38	274	23	37	16
Up to 4hrs	248	32	420	36	328	28	92	39
More than 4hrs	89	12	129	11	160	13	58	25
Overnight	63	8	58	5	145	12	21	9
No response	118	15	120	10	282	24	25	11

- 4 It is noteworthy that 12 per cent and 11 per cent of the girls in mixed and in all-girl schools respectively said they spent at least 4 hours at a given party (table 4), and up to 9 per cent and 6 per cent of girls in mixed and in all-girls schools respectively, attended parties with their boyfriends (table 5).

Table 5. How adolescents attend parties

How	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Alone	284	37	290	25	343	29	67	29
With G/friend	142	18	234	20	238	20	62	27
With B/friend	70	9	61	6	135	11	28	12
Others	123	16	317	27	143	12	12	5
No response	156	20	254	22	330	28	64	27

- 5 One common feature of such all-night parties is that these adolescents were free from adult supervision; all kinds of activities such as smoking, drinking alcohol, experimenting with drugs and sex do occur. These parties were invariably organized at club houses or halls and very rarely in a parent's house.

- 6 Contrary to the general belief that smoking is a problem associated with adolescent boys, results from this study (table 6) showed that 3 per cent of girls in both types of schools smoked. In fact, 9 per cent of the girls in mixed and 12 per cent in all girls' schools, said they had 1 to 3 girlfriends who smoked (table 6). These figures show that cigarette smoking is becoming a habit to contend with in adolescent girls.

Table 6a. Smoking habit in adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Smoke	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	23	3	30	3	75	6	27	12
No	587	76	1083	94	1020	86	196	84
No response	166	21	29	3	94	8	10	4

Table 6b.

Friends smoke	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	54	7	83	7	189	16	72	31
No	638	83	1019	89	833	70	126	54
No response	84	10	54	4	167	14	35	15

Table 6c.

No. of friends who smoke	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
± 3	70	9	146	12	212	13	52	22
± 6	30	4	70	6	138	12	53	23
> 6	7	1	20	2	63	5	13	6
No response	669	86	920	80	176	65	115	49

- 7 The chances are high that more girls will pick up the habit as a result of peer pressure. Many of these girls were only occasional smokers; they admitted to smoking only at parties. This confirms the earlier statement that parties are places where adolescents pick up negative habits like smoking. The adverse effects of smoking are well known and the consequences, particularly when such habits continue into adulthood and subsequently into the reproductive years, have been well documented.
- 8 On alcohol consumption, this study revealed that as many as 13 per cent of the girls in mixed schools and 16 per cent of the students in all-girls schools had consumed alcoholic drinks (table 7). Although cases of alcohol consumption have been surveyed in earlier studies (Adebusoye, 1991; Ladepo, 1993) none has been as high as has been revealed in this study, a fact which gives a cause for concern. When asked where they consumed alcohol, many of the girls admitted that they went to nightclubs.
- 9 The consequences of overindulgence in alcohol are obvious; someone under the influence of alcohol is likely to engage in acts he or she would otherwise not consider when sober. Such acts include having sex with known and unknown persons, taking other harmful drugs, rape, careless driving and so on. When questioned if they had friends who also consume alcohol, 2 per cent of the girls in mixed schools and 7 per cent of the girls in all-girls schools admitted to having between 3 and 4 girlfriends who took alcohol regularly (table 7).

- 10 When questioned on why they started to take alcohol and or smoke cigarettes, the majority of the students admitted that they started out of curiosity, contrary to the belief that youths start as a result of peer pressure. It is noteworthy, however, that every girl who admitted to smoking cigarette or drinking alcohol had at least three friends who also drank. This study revealed that most of these girls did not start with beer, but wine and sometimes spirits. The number of girls who drank beer was very difficult to quantify, as most were occasional drinkers. None of the girls admitted to ever being drunk.

Table 7a. Alcohol consumption by adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Take alcohol	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	98	13	185	16	274	23	81	35
No	619	80	875	76	731	61	135	58
No response	59	7	98	8	184	16	17	7

Table 7b.

Friends take alcohol	Total		Total		Total		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	133	17	204	18	317	27	95	41
No	529	68	861	75	681	57	97	42
No response	116	15	91	7	191	16	41	17

Table 7c.

No. of friends who take alcohol	Total		Total		Total		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
± 3	98	13	163	14	194	16	85	36
± 6	17	2	79	7	119	10	34	15
> 6	10	1	37	3	72	6	18	8
No response	651	84	877	76	804	68	96	41

### ***Relationships with the opposite sex***

- 11 In both mixed and in all-girls schools, more than 50 per cent of the girls admitted to having some sort of sexual relationship with boys; almost the same percentage (40 per cent) of the girls in all-girls and mixed schools denied having any form of relationship with boys (table 8). The implication of this is that more youths are becoming exposed to sexual relationships at a very tender age. About 21 per cent of the girls had boyfriends for the first time between the ages of 10 and 14 in all-girls secondary schools (table 10); only 13.5 per cent of the girls in mixed schools had boyfriends while in this age range. It was expected that girls in mixed schools, because of proximity, would have had

boyfriends at an earlier age than girls in all-girls schools, but our data does not support this conclusion.

**Table 8.** Girls in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have boyfriends

Have boyfriends	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	404	52	584	51
No	296	38	446	39
No response	74	10	126	10

- 12 It was found that 29 per cent and 40.5 per cent of the girls in all-girls and in mixed schools respectively had boyfriends for the first time between the ages of 15 and 20 years (table 10). From table 10 most of the girls had boyfriends for the first time at ages 15, 16, and 17 years in both types of schools. This may indicate that peer pressure and pressure from the opposite sex to get involved in a relationship may be highest at this age range.

**Table 9.** Boys in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have girlfriends

Have girlfriends	Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	573	48	172	74
No	269	23	36	15
No response	347	29	25	11

**Table 10.** Age at onset of having boyfriends/girlfriends among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Age	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
10 <	17	2.2	29	2.6	0		0	
11	6	0.8	17	1.6	222	18.6		
12	15	2.0	45	4.1	31	2.6	3	1
13	13	1.7	52	4.7	34	2.9		
14	50	6.4	75	6.8	40	3.4		
15	93	11.9	131	11.9	122	10.3	7	3
16	82	10.5	102	9.3	93	7.8		
17	85	10.9	49	4.5	43	3.6		
18	35	5.0	26	2.4	32	2.7	7	3
19	5	0.64	3	0.3	4	0.3		
20 >	24	3.0	18	1.6	15	1.3	18	
No response	355	45.4	551	50.1	555	46.6	198	

- 13 When asked who influenced their decision to have a boyfriend, 27 per cent of the girls in both types of schools replied that they were old enough (tables 11 and 12). Adolescents often think they are old enough to take certain important decisions which affect their lives. Although at times they may be wrong, things usually work out better,



if adolescents themselves are given a chance or put in a position of authority to decide what they think is best. The role of adults should be one of guidance, not of imposing what they think is ideal.

- 14 In mixed schools, peer pressure was one of the main reasons given as the reason to have a boyfriend; 12 per cent as opposed to 4 per cent in all-girls schools. Older brothers and sisters were also found to influence the decision to have boyfriends (table 11). One girl confirmed that her senior sister encouraged her to have a boyfriend, saying that there was no "big deal" in having one. In all-girls schools, 5 per cent of the girls claimed that their older brother or sister encouraged them to go out with boys, while in mixed schools the percentage was 6 (table 11). In both the mixed and all-girls schools, just 2 per cent of the girls responded that their parents influenced their decision to have boyfriends.

**Table 11.** Factors influencing the decision to have boy/riend/girlfriend among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Factor	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Parents	16	2	17	2	47	4	8	3
Friends	93	12	43	4	254	21	47	20
Sis/Bro.	47	6	51	5	69	6	20	9
Old enough	213	27	302	27	290	25	79	34
No response	406	53	694	62	529	44	79	34

**Table 12.** Factors influencing the decision to have sexual intercourse among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Factor	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Boy/Girl friends	71	9	72	6	194	16	48	20
Friends	51	6	34	3	174	15	33	14
Parents	12	2	10	1	44	4	11	5
Relations	21	2	17	2	61	5	11	5
Others	14	2	9	1	19	2	4	2
No response	607	79	977	87	697	58	126	54

- 15 Results from this study agree with reports (Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1991; Ladepo, 1993) that indicate that more adolescent girls are engaging in sexual intercourse at an early age. One per cent of the girls in both types of schools admitted to having sexual intercourse for the first time at the age of 10 years (table 13). Specifically, 10 girls in all girls' schools and 9 girls in mixed schools indicated that they had had sexual intercourse for the first time before or at the age of 10 years.

**Table 13.** Age at first sexual intercourse for adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Age	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
10	7	1	10	1	33	3	13	5
12	20	2	17	2	88	7	21	9
15	49	6	28	3	157	13	41	18
18 & above	115	15	163	14	175	15	27	12
No response	585	76	886	80	736	62	131	56

- 16 Two per cent of the girls in both types of schools admitted to having had sexual intercourse by the age of 12 years, a total of 37 girls in all. Up to 3 per cent and 6 per cent of the girls in all-girls and in mixed schools respectively indicated that they had had sexual intercourse for the first time between the ages of 13 and 15 years (table 13).
- 17 At the age of 10, a girl is still a child, and her secondary reproductive characteristics are not developed. Young girls are being enticed by unscrupulous adults and boys into engaging in sexual intercourse. Intercourse at this young age, before puberty, can have serious consequences for these girls, and can result in sterility or psychological problems.
- 18 The majority of the students who indulged in sexual intercourse were between the ages of 16 and 18, 15 per cent in mixed and 4 per cent in all-girls schools (table 13).
- 19 When questioned on the number of people they have had sexual intercourse with so far, 6 per cent of the girls in all-girls schools and 11 per cent in mixed schools admitted having had sexual intercourse with one partner only. However, at least one per cent of girls in all-girls and 2 per cent of the girls in mixed schools had had up to 3 partners (table 14). The figures are the same for girls who had had up to 4 partners in both types of schools.

Table 14. Number of sexual partners for adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

No of partners	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
1	84	11	71	6	135	11.6	11	5
2	16	2	14	1.0	81	7	27	12
3	12	1.5	15	1.0	50	4.2	38	16
4 and above	12	1.5	15	1.0	145	12	47	20
No response	652	84	988	91	778	65.4	110	47

- 20 A clearer picture of the present number of partners that sexually active girls have had can be seen from table 15. Up to 10 per cent of the sexually active girls in all-girls and 6.8 per cent in mixed schools had just one partner. On the other hand, 1.4 per cent of the sexually active girls in mixed and 5 per cent in all-girls schools had had more than one partner. In addition to this, one per cent of girls in both schools admitted to having had casual sexual encounters (one-night stands), a total of 19 girls in all. As emphasized before, these girls need to have access to information and services in order to avoid the risks to which they are exposing themselves; many young women are

totally unaware of the physical damage that sexual activities can have on their immature reproductive organs which could compromise their future fertility.

- 21 The most common factor which influenced girls' decisions to have sexual intercourse was found to be persuasion from their boyfriends. Six per cent of the girls in all-girls schools and 9 per cent of those in mixed schools (table 12) claimed that their boyfriends influenced their decision to have sex. Another factor was peer pressure, 3 per cent in all-girls and 6 per cent in mixed schools indicated that their friends persuaded them that it was alright to have sex (table 12).

**Table 15. Sexual behaviour of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan**

Sexual behaviour	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
None	1014	91	164	21	208	17	64	27
One partner	78	6.8	75	10	162	14	43	19
More than one partner	16	1.4	38	5	166	14	39	17
One-night stand	9	0.8	10	1	84	7	8	3
No response	0	0	487	63	569	48	79	34

- 22 In order to confirm the data on rate of sexual activity amongst adolescents, girls were asked to state the number of their friends who were having sexual intercourse. Twenty-one per cent of the girls in mixed and 17 per cent in all girls' schools confirmed that they had between 1-2 friends who had had sexual intercourse (table 16). Also, 9 per cent of the girls in mixed schools and 3 per cent in all-girls schools had between 3 to 4 friends who had sexual intercourse regularly; 3 per cent of the girls in both types of schools had more than 4 friends who were having sexual intercourse regularly (table 16).
- 23 When questioned on the incidence of teenage pregnancies in these schools, more than half of the girls knew one or more girls who got pregnant at some point in time in their schools (table 17). For example in all-girls schools, 73 per cent of the girls were aware that one or more girls had got pregnant while 57 per cent of the girls in mixed schools were similarly aware of cases of pregnancy in their schools.

**Table 16.. Friends of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan who have had sexual intercourse**

	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
± 2	164	21	199	12	293	25	23	10
± 4	69	9	320	19	215	18	73	31
> 4	26	3	320	19	100	8	30	13
Others	6	1	-	-	-	-	7	3
No response	512	66	797	49	582	49	100	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>777</b>		<b>1636</b>		<b>1190</b>		<b>233</b>	

**Table 17. Awareness of cases of pregnant students among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan**

Aware of pregnant student	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	441	57	844	73	429	36
No	229	29	185	16	389	33
No response	106	14	120	11	371	31

**Table 18. Cases of pregnancy among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan**

No. of cases	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%
1	156	20	254	32
2	115	15	290	36
3	61	8	117	15
4 and above	43	5	106	13
10 and above	9	1	34	4
No response	392	51	0	0

- 24 When questioned on the fate of such pregnancies, 18 per cent of the girls in mixed and 22 per cent in all girls schools said they were aborted (table 19); while 24 per cent and 27 per cent claimed that some of the babies were delivered. These figures confirm an increasing incidence of teenage pregnancies and abortions in secondary schools in Oyo State.

**Table 19. Fate of pregnancies of girls in selected secondary schools in Ibadan**

Fate of pregnancy	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%
Aborted	142	18.3	228	22
Not known	139	17.9	275	27
Baby delivered	183	23.6	275	27
No response	312	40.3	247	24

- 25 On the subject of contraceptives, 58 per cent of the girls in mixed schools and 58 per cent of the girls in all-girls schools had heard about contraception (table 20). However, very few of the girls, 13 per cent in mixed and 6 per cent in all-girls schools admitted that they would use any of the available methods to prevent pregnancy. In fact, only 2 per cent of the girls in all-girls schools disclosed that their boyfriends used condoms, while none of the girls in mixed schools would disclose the type of contraception they used. It appears that the use of contraceptive devices is low when compared with the number of sexually active girls. The need for education on and the provision of contraception for adolescent girls and boys are factors which should be urgently discussed by school administrators and parents of adolescent children in order to reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies and abortions.
- 26 For the girls in both types of schools, their main source of information on contraception was the media, 59 per cent in mixed and 54 per cent in all-girls schools



(table 21). These figures show the importance of the media in informing students and developing their minds in a positive direction, by providing facts on sexual and reproductive health.

- 27 On the topic of sexually transmitted diseases, more than half of the students had heard about AIDS and other STDs (table 22), but the question that needs to be asked is whether or not they believed that they themselves could contract AIDS, given the fact that they indulged in sexual intercourse without protection.

**Table 20a.** Awareness and use of contraceptives among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Aware	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	423	55	659	58	478	40	124	5
No	206	26	287	25	323	27	56	2
No response	147	19	192	17	388	33	53	2

**Table 20b.**

Use	Total		Total		Total		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	99	13	64	6	219	18	73	3
No	526	68	892	78	577	49	118	5
No response	151	19	186	16	393	33	42	18

**Table 20c.**

Type	Total		Total		Total		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Condom	0	0	21	2	151	13	65	2
Other	6	0.8	0	0	8	0.7	0	0
No response	770	99.2	1101	98	1030	86.3	168	7

**Table 21.** Sources of information on contraception among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Source	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Parents	14	5	60	6	45	4	4	2
Friends	49	6	59	6	87	7	30	13
Relation	27	4	56	6	39	3	4	2
<i>Media:</i>								
TV/radio	364	47	423	41	454	38	86	37
Magazines	93	12	133	13	79	6	38	16
No response	202	26	287	28	485	42	71	30

**Table 22a.** Awareness of and types of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Ibadan

Aware	Girls (mixed schools)		Girls (all-girls schools)		Boys (mixed schools)		Boys (all-boys schools)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	487	63	934	81	688	58	205	88
No	202	26	144	13	246	21	18	8
No response	87	11	66	6	21	21	10	4

Table 22b.

Type of STD known	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
AIDS	412	53	821	73	662	55.6	138	59
Syphilis	21	3	0	0	19	1.5	9	4
Gonorrhoea	19	2	91	8	34	2.8	49	2
No response	324	42	207	19	474	40.1	37	1

## Findings concerning boys

- 28 The ages of boys in mixed schools (table 2) showed that most of them fell within the adolescent age group, between the ages of 13 and 19, the target group for this study. In mixed schools 29.6 per cent of the boys were 17 years old, 24 per cent were 16 years and 22 per cent were 18. In Loyola College, which was the only all-boys school studied, 41.4 per cent of the boys were 16 years, 32 per cent were 17 years and 11.2 per cent were 15 (table 2).
- 29 On the subject of party attendance, 86 per cent of the boys in the all-boys schools said they went to parties regularly, while the figure was 75 per cent for boys in mixed schools (table 3). This indicates that many boys were frequently exposed to the various types of unwholesome activities which take place during parties. The frequency of party attendance for both boys and girls in the schools studied was almost the same. At least 13 per cent of the boys in mixed schools, and 25 per cent of boys in the all-boys school admitted to spending at least 4 hours at any given party, while 12 per cent of the boys in mixed schools and 9 per cent in Loyola College stayed overnight at such parties (table 4). These figures are relatively higher than those for girls and this indicates that boys have a higher degree of freedom to attend social functions than girls. Thus, boys more often than girls, are exposed to negative influences such as smoking, alcohol and drugs amongst others. Boys are also often more eager to experiment with these activities, and have a greater need to try things to prove their maturity.
- 30 Discussions with some of the boys indicated that most of them who smoked and drank, picked up these habits at parties. On the subject of how they went to these parties, in mixed schools, 29 per cent went alone, 20 per cent with their girlfriends, 11 per cent with their boyfriends and 12 per cent with other people, mostly parents and relations (table 5). In Loyola College, 29 per cent of the boys went to parties alone, 27 per cent with their girlfriends, 12 per cent with their boyfriends, and 5 per cent with other people (table 5). The boys confirmed that most of these parties were organized in nightclubs, where they were free to do whatever they liked. The survey showed that parties which lasted only 4 hours were mostly held at friends' houses, while the ones that lasted all night were held at nightclubs, restaurants, hotels, etc. It was not

confirmed, however, whether violent criminal activities such as rape occurred at some of these parties, as alleged by the girls.

- 31 When questioned about their relationships with the members of the opposite sex, 74 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 48 per cent of those in mixed schools admitted to having girlfriends (table 9). This confirms that most adolescent boys in secondary schools have some form of sexual relationship with girls. In fact, 18 per cent of the boys in mixed schools had girlfriends for the first time at age 11 years and below, while in Loyola College one per cent admitted to having had girlfriends before the age of 12 (table 10). This is in line with the results obtained for girls and indicates that more adolescents are now engaging in sexual relationships at a very early age, when the ideal thing is that they should concentrate on their studies. This early initiation into having girlfriends often stems from peer pressure.
- 32 Most of these boys, particularly in mixed schools had girlfriends who attended all-girls secondary schools. These girls were not familiar with boys like the girls in mixed schools. When asked what influenced their decision to have a girlfriend, 20 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 21 per cent of the boys in mixed schools said they were influenced by their friends who also had girlfriends, while 34 per cent and 25 per cent in Loyola College and mixed schools respectively claimed that they were old enough to have girlfriends (table 11). There is the need to determine through research, the effect of indulging in sexual relationships on the academic performance of the adolescents.
- 33 Up to 15 per cent of the boys in mixed schools had had sexual intercourse for the first time at the age of 18 years and 13 per cent had had sexual intercourse for the first time at the age of 15 years (table 13). Also, 3 per cent and 7 per cent of the boys had had sexual intercourse for the first time at the ages of 10 and 12 years respectively. This is in agreement with many other findings (Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1991; Ladepo, 1993) that adolescents now engage in sexual intercourse at an early age and are therefore in urgent need of information and programmes, which emphasize the implications of early sexual activity, that is, the issues of teenage pregnancy and the increasing incidence of STDs among youths.
- 34 To bring about the necessary changes, there is the need to take note of the point made earlier on, that adolescents normally think that they are old enough to take some important decisions concerning their lives. Therefore, in planning programmes for them, their opinions should be sought and strongly considered. Another important point is that peer pressure, to a very large extent, determines what many adolescents do. There is the need to use this peer pressure to the advantage of the adolescents themselves by putting them in positions where they can effect the changes in their friends and class mates.
- 35 Contrary to the results obtained for mixed schools, 18 per cent of the boys from Loyola College had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 16 years while 12 per cent had sexual relations for the first time by the age of 18 years (table 13). However, five per cent had sexual intercourse by the age of 10, while 9 per cent had by the age of 12 (table 13). These figures confirm the fact that our adolescents have opportunities to engage in sexual relationships.
- 36 When asked exactly what influenced their decision to have sexual intercourse for the first time, 16 per cent of the boys in mixed schools and 20 per cent of the boys at Loyola College claimed that their girlfriends influenced their decision (table 12) although they

could not explain how they were influenced by their girlfriends. In addition, 14 per cent to 15 per cent of the boys in both the mixed schools and Loyola College admitted that their friends influenced their decision to have sex (table 12). Some of these boys confirmed that these friends had also had sexual intercourse (table 16) and encouraged them to do the same, telling them that ‘they do not know what they are missing’.

- 37 A point that comes out here is that potential sexual partners have a stronger influence on the decision to have sexual intercourse than peers. Adolescents should be made to realise that the final decision to have or not to have sexual intercourse rests with them personally and that they should not be influenced by their boyfriends/girlfriends or peer pressure. Therefore, programmes organized for adolescents especially on taking decisions should have this as a focal point.
- 38 When questioned on the number of partners they had had sexual intercourse with, 11.6 per cent and 5 per cent of the boys in mixed schools and Loyola College respectively claimed to have had just one partner; 7 per cent and 12 per cent of the boys in mixed schools and Loyola College respectively had up to 2 partners, while 4.2 per cent and 16 per cent in mixed schools and Loyola College respectively had up to 3 partners (table 14).
- 39 Higher percentages were obtained for those who had had 4 partners and above, these are 20 per cent in Loyola College and 12 per cent in mixed schools.
- 40 Information on the number of partners boys surveyed are presently having sexual intercourse with is provided in table 15. Up to 19 per cent in Loyola College and 14 per cent in mixed schools claimed they had just one sexual partner; while 17 per cent in Loyola College and 14 per cent in mixed schools said they had more than one sexual partner. Having sexual intercourse with more than one partner is one of the ways by which sexually transmitted diseases are spread. There is an urgent need to provide more information on how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases before these youths face the greatest risk of their lives; HIV infection.
- 41 Having a sexual relationship with an unknown person or casual friend on a one-night stand basis also exposes adolescents to sexually transmitted diseases. Three per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 7 per cent in mixed schools admitted to having had sexual intercourse on a one-night stand basis. Some of the boys were not willing to disclose the class of people they had sexual intercourse with, that is, whether they were prostitutes or girls they picked up at parties. However, two of such boys in mixed schools disclosed that they had had sexual intercourse at parties with girls. They did not disclose however, whether these girls were forced into having sexual intercourse or were willing partners. This finding confirms the earlier statement that unsupervised teenage parties can provide a venue for undesirable activities.
- 42 On the issue of peers who were having sexual intercourse, 25 per cent of the boys in mixed schools and 10 per cent in Loyola College respectively claimed they had at least 2 friends who had sexual intercourse regularly, while 18 per cent and 31 per cent claimed to have at least 4 friends who had sexual intercourse regularly (table 16). The disparity in these figures is due to the fact that many students are not willing to disclose information on their personal relationships, but they readily talk about the escapades of their friends.
- 43 Results show that in spite of the negative effects of habits such as smoking and drinking alcohol, the level of consumption is relatively high. It was found that 12 per

cent of the boys in Loyola College and 6 per cent in mixed schools smoked cigarettes (table 6). The high percentage of smokers in Loyola College cannot be explained, but a relatively high number of students who smoked was also observed in Ibadan Grammar School where the majority of the students are boys. In fact the school accounted for more than one third of the total number of smokers in mixed schools.

- 44 In addition, at least 31 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 16 per cent in mixed schools had friends who smoked (table 6); and again, Ibadan Grammar School accounted for approximately one third of the boys who also had friends who smoked. A breakdown of the actual number of friends who smoked is presented in table 6.
- 45 On alcohol consumption, the trend was the same; 35 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 23 per cent in mixed schools reported that they drank alcohol (table 6). Most of these boys claimed to have taken alcohol at youth gatherings, at nightclubs and at parties. Only 2 boys admitted to going to beer parlours to take alcohol on a regular basis. Up to 41 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 27 per cent in mixed schools respectively disclosed that they had friends who take alcohol (table 6).
- 46 On the issue of awareness of girls who got pregnant in their schools, 36 per cent of the boys in mixed schools said they were aware of girls who got pregnant in the school. At least 10 per cent of the boys were aware of one girl; another 10 per cent were aware of 2 girls, while 4-5 per cent claimed that they were aware of at least 3 or 4 girls who got pregnant; one per cent of the boys disclosed that they were aware of up to 10 girls who got pregnant, but this may be an exaggeration on the part of the boys (table 18).
- 47 On the fate of these pregnancies, 8 per cent of the boys in mixed schools claimed they were aborted, 13 per cent did not know what happened to the pregnancies, while 7 per cent disclosed that the babies were delivered (table 19).<sup>1</sup> These figures show that even boys are aware of the fate of such pregnancies. The figures confirm that a serious situation exists in our schools and that there is an urgent need to address the problem. The negative consequences of teenage pregnancies and abortions include the debilitating effect on the general health of the girl and the baby. In addition, abortion can jeopardize the future fertility of the girl concerned.
- 48 Many of the boys claimed to know about contraceptives, 53 per cent in Loyola College and 40 per cent in mixed schools (table 20) but claims on usage were lower, 31 % in Loyola and 18 per cent in mixed schools. No question was asked to ascertain if the boys who used contraceptives were using them properly. The most commonly used contraceptive was the condom. Up to 28 per cent of the boys in Loyola College, and 13 per cent in mixed schools used this barrier method of contraception (table 20). However, less than one per cent of the boys in mixed schools claimed to use other methods of contraception.
- 49 When the number of boys who claimed to be having sexual relations was compared with those who use contraceptives, it appears some boys who admitted to having sexual intercourse do not use any contraceptives. For example, for Loyola College, the total percentage of the boys having sexual intercourse whether with just one partner or more than one partner or on one-night stand basis was found to be 39 per cent, whereas only 31 per cent used contraceptives. In mixed schools the situation was nearly the same, 35 per cent of the boys admitted to having sexual intercourse whereas only 18 per cent used contraceptives. These boys who do not use any protection, face increased risks of catching sexually transmitted diseases. Although they do not carry

pregnancies, they suffer from the psychological effects, in terms of the stigma attached to such young parents in the Nigerian society.

- 50 The most common source of information on contraceptives was the media. Precisely 53 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 44 per cent in mixed schools mentioned the media as their major source of information on contraceptives (table 21). Friends were another major source of information; 13 per cent in Loyola College and 7 per cent in mixed schools.
- 51 Parents and relations were shown to be poor sources of information on contraception. Parents should be enlightened on the role they should play in the dissemination of the right information to adolescents. These findings confirm the important role played by the mass media in the dissemination of information.
- 52 On the subject of sexually transmitted diseases, 88 per cent of the boys in Loyola College and 58 per cent in mixed schools had heard about STDs; in fact almost all of the students knew about AIDs (table 22). It is, however, not certain whether these boys were aware of the fact that the safest form of protection available is the condom and that they were vulnerable to STDs if they did not use some form of protection.
- 

## FOOTNOTES

1. As Loyola College is an all boys school, the question was not administered to them.



# Discussion

p. 27-31

---

## Girls

### *Attendance at parties*

- 1 This study has shown that a very high percentage of adolescent girls in the study area attend parties either alone or with their boyfriends and they start attending parties at a very young age. Such attendance at parties from a very early age and staying at parties overnight are factors which expose adolescents to many negative activities such as smoking, alcohol consumption, experimenting with drugs, sexual intercourse and rape. The fact that such parties usually take place at nightclubs, hotels, or public halls far away from adult supervision makes it easy for these adolescents to indulge in all kinds of undesirable activities. Therefore, there is a need to discourage adolescents from attending all-night or even all-day parties which are not chaperoned by adults. Young women who are relatively naive about sexual matters can be taken advantage of by older boys, especially when both parties are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### *Smoking*

- 2 It is clear from this study that owing mainly to peer pressure, more adolescent girls are smoking cigarettes. Adolescent girls may not be aware of the hazards of smoking, especially if they come from homes where one or both of their parents are smokers. Young girls may smoke as a result of peer pressure, curiosity or because they think it is fashionable. Therefore it is necessary to educate them on the health risks associated with smoking, especially the negative consequences on their reproductive health.

### *Alcohol consumption*

- 3 This study suggests that alcohol consumption among young girls is due more to curiosity than peer pressure. Girls need to be educated on the consequences of taking

alcohol, especially outside their homes. They should be cautioned about the possibility that other intoxicants, which have a higher alcoholic content, could be secretly introduced into their drinks, which could make them vulnerable to all kinds of abuse (Odejide et al. 1987).

### ***Relationships with boys***

- 4 This study has shown that more than half of the adolescent girls in secondary schools (all-girls and mixed schools) have some form of relationship with boys. These friendships often start at a relatively young age; contrary to expectation, girls in all-girls' schools start to have boyfriends at a slightly younger age than girls in mixed schools. This may be due to a combination of factors. First, girls in mixed schools are constantly exposed to boys and as such are usually more skeptical about getting involved with boys; second, the teachers are usually on the lookout for, and discourage such relationships. Girls in all-girls schools do not have ready access to boys and as such they may even have a stronger urge to have a boyfriend, either out of curiosity or peer pressure. Another important point is that boys often prefer to go out with girls in girls' schools, as many of them believe it is more prestigious; also they do not trust the girls in their own schools who are more familiar with their behaviour.
- 5 This early exposure to members of the opposite sex means that girls are under pressure and are being enticed at an early age into having boyfriends and sexual intercourse. Most boys are involved in these relationships mainly for sexual adventure. The situation is vice versa, at the initial stage of the relationship with girls, that is before they are convinced to take the final plunge. The lesson to teach at this stage in the life of girls is that their studies should and must come first.
- 6 There is no documentation which shows that the academic performance of girls who have boyfriends is below standard, although the teachers believe that having boyfriends at an early age does negatively affect the performance of such girls in class. This is an area which should be verified through further study.
- 7 This survey has demonstrated that peer pressure among boys to get involved in sexual relationships is strongest between the ages of 15 to 17. Therefore, for any programmes to have the desired impact, it must be tailored towards the early teenage years, when peer pressure to get involved in sexual relationships is low.
- 8 This study also shows that parents and relations encourage adolescent girls to get involved in sexual relationships. It is necessary to conduct studies to determine the factors that cause parents and relations to encourage adolescent girls to engage in sexual relationships with boys. The findings in this study confirm other reports that more adolescent girls are engaging in sexual intercourse at increasingly younger ages, and often before they reach puberty, at a time when their bodies are not even prepared for the consequences of these acts, such as teenage pregnancy. Recent studies show that early initiation to sexual intercourse is a contributory factor to cervical cancer. This is because the cells of the cervix are still undergoing changes and the introduction of foreign bodies may modify normal cell formation processes leading to the development of abnormal cells, which may be malignant. Young girls who engage in multiple sexual relationships should be made aware of the danger of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS.

- 9 In addition to contracting sexually transmitted diseases, early sexual relations can result in unwanted pregnancy, early motherhood, or abortion. Having a baby while in secondary school means that the girl's education will be truncated. She may be forced into an early marriage and never finish her education. Having an abortion, which is illegal in Nigeria, may rescue the young girl from the crisis of an unwanted child, but may jeopardize her future reproductive capacity. All these factors, including the psychological effects, have a debilitating impact on the health of young women (UNICEF, 1993).
- 10 This study has shown that the mass media have a strong capacity to modify the behaviour of adolescents either negatively or positively, depending on the quality of information provided. Therefore, mass media education has a high potential for influencing the minds of the adolescent girls in a positive direction by providing appropriate information on sexual and reproductive health. Besides the mass media, guidance counsellors in the schools could provide information on sexual and reproductive health education to these girls during schools hours. This study has also shown that peer pressure influences, to a large extent, what many adolescents do. This factor can be used to an advantage if the adolescents themselves are made to play an active role in the programmes designed to modify their own sexual reproductive health behaviour.
- 11 It is hoped that by taking such positive steps towards solving the various problems, the incidence of teenage pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted diseases among girls in secondary schools can be minimized.

## Boys

- 12 The trends in the behaviour of adolescent boys were similar to those for adolescent girls with respect to attendance at parties, smoking, consumption of alcohol, experimenting with drugs and sexual intercourse. However, the numbers of boys involved are relatively higher than those for girls. It is believed that the mass media which still air attractive commercials on alcohol and cigarettes are one of the major factors responsible for the high level of consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking among adolescent boys.
- 13 The consequences of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking are well known and have been documented, and they cannot be overemphasized. Tobacco is classified as a drug, because of the nicotine content. Various studies have shown that virtually all drug addicts were at one time or the other, cigarette smokers. Therefore, there is the strong need to discourage smoking among adolescents, as it can lead to other substance abuse and addiction to other inhaled drugs. There is a strong correlation between truancy and cigarette smoking as most schools forbid smoking on their grounds. Young boys who are habitual smokers rarely take their studies seriously and may end up dropping out of school.
- 14 This study has shown that although boys do not face the risks of pregnancy and abortion, they suffer from the psychological effects in terms of the stigma attached to being a young parent in the Nigerian society. Adolescent boys are also exposed to the danger of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, if they have sexual intercourse indiscriminately and without taking protective measures.

# Conclusions and recommendations

p. 31-33

---

- 1 More than half of the population in developing countries including Nigeria are under the age of 16 years; people in this age group are or will become the parents of the next generation. In Nigeria, adolescence has traditionally been a brief interlude between puberty and marriage; adolescents are generally less susceptible to life threatening diseases than the very young or the very old. Hence, health problems specific to their age group have received little or no attention.
- 2 Results from this study show that adolescents in Nigeria are becoming more involved in undesirable activities such as cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, drug abuse and pre-marital sex. As a result, teenagers are presenting with many sexually related diseases and problems associated with unhealthy activities. Teenage mothers are a social liability to national development and progress; the education of the young mother has to be stopped even temporarily; she may be forced into an early marriage, which may end her formal education completely; this may affect her earning capacity and her ability to cater for her child. Early pregnancy can also compromise the future reproductive capacity of a young woman.
- 3 Most of the undesirable activities associated with adolescents can be linked directly to influence from their peers and changes in social behaviour resulting from urbanization, reduced family influence, increased rural to urban migration, increased exposure to the mass media, and lack of guidance and appropriate information, both at home and at school.
- 4 This study shows that very little has been done or is being done to alleviate the various problems associated with adolescent reproductive health in Nigeria. The current efforts being made leave little room for contributions from the young people themselves, and so, the effects of such efforts have been minimal.
- 5 In order to achieve an overall improvement in adolescent reproductive health in Nigeria, the following recommendations are advanced.
  1. Attempts should be made to improve the understanding of the adolescents, of the physical, psychological and social aspects of adolescent reproductive health.
  2. Key people with influence on adolescents as well as the adolescent themselves, should be trained in counselling and communication skills, so that they can

- disseminate necessary information and provide the necessary guidance to the vulnerable adolescents.
3. Policies and programmes should be promoted which reflect the best ways to meet the reproductive health needs of adolescents.
  4. Ways should be found to provide alternatives to early child bearing by women, so as to allow them to be better educated and thus improve their status.
  5. Since peer group pressure and the mass media have been shown to have a strong influence on modifying the behaviour of the adolescents, these two factors should be considered useful tools in the dissemination of information and provision of guidance to the adolescents.
- 6 There is an urgent need to put in place programmes that will target these students and provide them with access to information and services that will reduce the risks to which they are continuously exposed. Nigerian society places a premium on marriage and children-, a marriage without children often breaks down. Teenagers should be aware of the risks they are placing themselves in by engaging in casual sexual relationships which could compromise their future happiness as married adults.
- 

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Makinwa-Adebusoye, O. K. 1991. Adolescent reproductive health behaviour in Nigeria. A study of 5 cities. NISER Monograph series No. 3. 1991.
- Ladepo, O. 1993. Current trends in social behaviour of girls. Paper presented at a seminar on Education of Girls and Current Trends in Social Behaviour. Food Basket Foundation International. December, 1993.
- Odejide, A. O., J. U. Ohaeri, M. F. Adelekan, and B. A. Ikuesan. 1987. Drinking behaviour and social change among youths in Nigeria. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 20 (3): 227.
- UNICEF. 1993. *AIDS: The Second Decade. A focus on youth and women*. UNICEF, NY.

## References

p. 33

---

Makinwa-Adebusoye, O. K. 1991. Adolescent reproductive health behaviour in Nigeria. A study of 5 cities. NISER Monograph series No. 3. 1991.

Ladepo, O. 1993. Current trends in social behaviour of girls. Paper presented at a seminar on Education of Girls and Current Trends in Social Behaviour. Food Basket Foundation International. December, 1993.

Odejide, A. O., J. U. Ohaeri, M. F. Adelekan, and B. A. Ikuesan. 1987. Drinking behaviour and social change among youths in Nigeria. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 20 (3): 227.

UNICEF. 1993. *AIDS: The Second Decade. A focus on youth and women*. UNICEF, NY.