
**PERCEPTION OF MALE UNDERGRADUATES ABOUT
THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF FEMALE
UNDERGRADUATES TOWARDS SEX-FOR-GRADE
PHENOMENON IN NIGERIA TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS**

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Abstract

Tertiary Institution teachers are always the objects of ridicules when it comes to the issue of sex-for-grade in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The incidence of sex-for-grade in tertiary institutions in Nigeria should not be looked at from only one angle, that is, the lecturers. Studies have revealed that students, especially, female students lure male lecturers into sex-for-grade in order to receive favour of grades. Therefore, the study examines the perception of male undergraduates about the contributions of female undergraduates to the prevalence of sex-for-grade in tertiary institutions, and how the phenomenon influences their attitudes towards studies. Three hundred male undergraduates were purposively selected from the three public universities in Ogun State. Self-developed

questionnaire tagged 'Perception of Sex-for-Grade Questionnaire' (PSQ) was the instrument used to collect data from the participants. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method (.74). The result shows that female undergraduates contribute to the prevalence of sex-for-grade in tertiary institutions (0.50, 0.69, 0.61, 0.60, 0.60); sex-for-grade phenomenon has negative influence on female undergraduates attitudes to study; and that any female undergraduate involved in and initiated sex-for-grade should be punished. It was recommended among others that tertiary institutions should enforce proper dress code for students, especially female students.

Keywords: Sex-for-grade, female undergraduates, attitude to study.

Introduction

Among vices common in tertiary institutions is sex-for-grade. Sex has been a tool to influence outcomes, decisions, or gain undue favour or advantage over others in high and low places (Amuchie, 2021). Both men and women use sex as bait to get what they desire or to achieve personal aggrandizement; they may get away with it, depending on the value of the society. Sex-for-grade is done between lecturer and students, mostly, male lecturers and female students. It is believed that sex-for-grade is a phenomenon initiated by male lecturers to satisfy their sexual urge through female students. Abdussalam (2020) states that sex for grade is a corrupt practice usually done by lecturers of institutions, in which they demand for sex in order to pass the student. Griffin (2015) cited in Adekeye and Ajayi (2022) states that sex for grade is an academic corruption and it occurs at the tertiary educational institutions where its consequences are particularly damaging, since future economic and political leaders are trained there.

In Nigeria higher institutions, the phenomenon, sex-for-grade has been on for decades as part of the usual on campuses and in recent years, the menace has dented the image of the country in the

international community (Amuchie, 2021). Students came to university from the larger society, and many of them have been exposed to thinking that sexual relationship in whatever form is a normal way of life and a tool to progress in life. Many female students think of compensation to offer, while the male lecturers think that it is a compensation to receive (Amuchie, 2021). It is also believed that many female students throw themselves to male lecturers with the hope to pass the examinations, especially the weak ones. No wonder, it is not uncommon to find in Nigeria classrooms, female students dressed in manners that are provocative. In such instances where students reveal sensitive parts such as breasts, hips, thighs, back and sometimes panties while in class, lecturers without the morale strength to resist may demand for sex from such students.

Studying and making good grades is the life blood in tertiary education. Many students boast good grades and it is quite a huge milestone and beautiful experience to pass exams and clear courses to go to the next session. However, Chogo (2020) states that between the walls of universities are a dark world hinged to the academic life of some students. One can say there is a market where sex is exchanged for grades. Many young female students have found themselves in this predicament, either as victims of abuse or as victimizers who use bottom power to get what they want. In some instances, there is a transactional operation between both parties, where students and lecturers consent to having sex in exchange for grades to pass courses.

In the past, cases of sexual harassment, sexual pressure or sex-for-grades were very rare. As a matter of fact, it was very undignifying to hear of such a thing either by a female student or by a male lecturer. The questions people are bound to ask is: Why is it now so frequent and why are male lecturers attracted to their female students? Three major facts were revealed in the study carried out by Omonigho (2019) on the causes of sex-for-grade in our tertiary institutions; firstly, it was discovered that students were no longer as studious as they used to be in the past. Millennium institution students are being distracted by a lot of things: their android telephones which they check every now and then when

lectures are going on, facebook, instagram, snapchat, and many other social media platforms. The rate at which students miss classes lately is alarming, they prefer to be somewhere else, like club or other social gathering instead of being in class. Secondly, Omonigho's findings show that some students were in the habit of sitting back at their student centres fraternising while lectures are going on. Students who pay little or no attention to lectures and other class activities are ten times more likely to seek extra help or present themselves for favour than students who participated actively in their classes. The third factor discovered was the way and manner female students dress on campus. A male lecturer who is struggling to control himself may find it difficult to resist some of the girls wearing these modern clothes.

Professor Okwechime Emmanuel of the University of Benin (UNIBEN) said in a phone interview with Vanguard on 8th October, 2019, that there were some female students that dressed half nude to class because they wanted to “obtain Sexually Transmitted Degree (STD)”, thereby a possible cause of the widespread Sex-for-Grade in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Okwechime added that sometimes, girls harassed lecturers sensually; to him, many girls wanted degree by sexual intercourse, when the lecturer refused to oblige to them, they go and blackmail him (*Vanguard*, 8th October, 2019). Ekundayo and Akinsuroju (2022) stated that students also offer sex to lecturers in order to boost their scores. Ekundayo and Akinsuroju added that sex-for- marks takes two forms: one is comically referred to as STD (Sexually Transmitted Degree), here, female students throw themselves sexually at male lecturers for better grades in their individual courses. The sex is initiated by the female students for academic favour, while the other is when the lecturer demanded for it.

Studies have shown that in most cases, the female students take the first move to lure male lecturers into this act purposely for academic rewards. According to Okebukola (2018), as cited in Ekundayo and Akinsuroju (2022) those students who are good academically cannot be harassed by their teachers but, those who are weak academically are the ones harassed or offered their teachers

their bodies for academic rewards. Ibrahim, Sogbanmu, Omoju, and Ukwaja (2020) affirm in a study on the integrity of the Nigerian University system that some lecturers who perpetrated this act confessed that female students were the initiators of this devilish act. The study also shows that some female students consent that nothing special and its not a crime for female students to date male lecturers provided that there was an agreement between them. They further declared that:

Some of the female students deliberately engage in sexual relationship with lecturers to acquire the status of a “super girl” on campus where they derive great pleasure and are highly thrilled. Conversely, some students, directly or indirectly, initiate romantic and sexual intimacies with lecturers because they are lazy and academically very weak with the hope to exploit the sexual relationship to acquire undeserved grades as a cover for the academic weakness (p. 141).

The above submission is said to be the true picture of the happenings between male lecturers and female students in most cases. It has been observed that some students, particularly female ones consider sex-for-grades option as the only alternative to securing good grades to enhance their Cumulative Grade Point Average, CGPA, while others could be victims of predators who hide under the cover of lecturers.

Undoubtedly, many tertiary institutions not only in Nigeria have been fraught with reported incidents of sexual harassment, especially sex-for-grades, and the public has been made to believe that lecturers especially male ones are the perpetrators because many of them lack self-control; but considering the findings of some scholars like Ibrahim, *et al.* (2020), Ekundayo and Akinsuroju (2022) and Omonigho (2019), one may not attribute the blame on lecturers only, but also the female students. There is no doubt many female students contribute to the prevalence of sex-for-grade phenomenon in our tertiary institutions (Ibrahim *et al.* [2020], Ekundayo and Akinsuroju [2022] and Omonigho [2019]). Therefore, it is pertinent to find out the contributions of female undergraduates to the

phenomenon of sex-for-grade, and how this phenomenon influences their attitudes towards their study.

Purposes of the Study

1. To investigate the perception of male undergraduates about the contributions of female undergraduates towards the prevalence of sex-for-grade in tertiary institutions.
2. To assess the perception of male undergraduates on the influence of 'sex-for-grade' on female undergraduates' attitude to studies.
3. To find out from male undergraduates the strategic measures towards eradication of sex-for-grade.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the purposes of the study, the following questions were raised:

1. What are the perceptions of male undergraduates about the contributions of female undergraduates to the prevalence of sex-for-grade.
2. What are the perceptions of male undergraduates on the influence of 'sex-for-grade' on female undergraduates' attitude to studies.
3. What are the strategic measures towards the eradication of sex-for-grade.

Methods

The study adopts descriptive research design. The population of the study is all male undergraduates in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun and Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. These three universities were selected for the study because issues of sex-for-grade were common in public universities, and they are the three public universities in Ogun State. The sample of the study is three hundred male students who were purposively selected from 300 and 400 levels male students of the three universities. One hundred male students were selected

from each university. Three and four hundred levels students were considered for the study because it was believed that they were senior students and that they had more campus experiences than those students in the lower levels. Male undergraduates were considered as participants for the study in order to get reliable results, as they will not be biased since the issue of sex-for-grade in this context is not directly about them.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers tagged 'Perception of Sex-for-Grade Questionnaire' (PSQ). The questionnaire consists two sections, A and B. Section A contains items that seek information on demographic data of the respondents, such as name of university, Department of student, Academic level of students. Section B of the instrument adapted a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree and it contains salient questions intended to elicit response on the purposes of the study. This instrument was validated using face and content validity through peer/expert review. To determine the reliability of the instrument, it was administered to thirty (30) undergraduates in Lagos State University. The reliability co-efficient was determined using Cronbach Alpha method, all the items showed high reliability and it generated $\alpha = .74$. This showed that the instrument was highly reliable. While administering the questionnaire, researcher and her research assistants adequately explain the instrument to the respondents before administering it.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of male undergraduates about the contributions of female undergraduates to the prevalence of sex-for-grade?

Table 1: Male Students Perception about the Contributions of Female Students to the Prevalence of Sex-For-Grade

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1.	Indecent dressing is a major factor that attract male lecturers to female students	119 39.7%	137 45.6%	23 7.6%	21 7%	3.18	0.50
2.	Female students who are naturally and physically endowed attracts the attention of male lecturer	77 25.7%	79 26%	93 31%	51 17%	2.60	0.69
3.	Keeping close friendship with male lecturers attracts male lecturers to female students	97 32%	121 40.3%	52 17.3%	30 10%	2.95	0.61
4.	The quest for academic favour from male lecturers also attracts female students to male lecturers	132 44%	98 32.7%	35 11.7%	35% 11.7%	3.09	0.60
5.	Direct approach by female student to male lecturers in readiness to offer sex for grades	178 59.3%	78 26%	12 4%	32 10.7%	3.3	0.60

Note: The determinant value is 2.5.

Decision Rule: (i) If the grand mean was greater than 2.5, it is agreement. (ii) If grand mean was lesser than 2.5, it is disagreement. Any mean score of 2.5 and above was accepted, while any one below 2.5 was rejected.

Table 1 mean scores are 3.18, 2.60, 2.95, 3.09 and 3.3, and they are all above the cut-off point of 2.50 which indicates that all the items are accepted by the respondents. The standard deviation of

0.50 to 0.69 indicates that the respondents are close in their responses.

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of male undergraduates on the influence of 'sex-for-grade' on female undergraduates' attitude to studies?

Table 2: Table showing the effect of sex-for-grade on female undergraduates' attitudes towards studies

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1.	The notion of sex for grade encourages indiscipline among female students, hence, disrespect their lecturers.	89 29.7%	76 25.3%	34 11.3%	101 33.6%	2.51	0.61
2.	The notion of sex for grade discourages female students from reading and studying effectively	131 43.6%	59 19.6%	71 23.6%	39 13%	2.94	0.69
3.	The notion of sex for grade discourages many female students from paying attention in the classroom	98 32.6%	137 45.7%	41 13.7%	24 8%	3.14	0.68
4.	The notion of sex for grade makes some female students skip classes	101 33.7%	119 39.7%	61 20.3%	19 6.3%	3.0	0.50
5.	The phenomenon of sex-for-grade enhances the reduction of female students zeal to participate in academic activities	142 47.3%	89 29.7%	65 21.7%	4 1.3%	3.2	0.69

In Table 2 above, mean scores 2.92, 3.28, 3.09, 3.05 and 3.3 are all above the cut-off point of 2.50, these indicate that all the items are accepted by the respondents. The standard deviation of 0.50 to 0.69 indicate that the respondents are close in their responses.

Research Question 3: What are the strategic measures towards the eradication of sex-for-grade phenomenon?

Table 3: Table showing how the menace of sex-for-grade can be minimized in Nigeria universities

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1.	Organizing seminars or lectures on the dangers of sex for grade for both lecturers and students.	99 33%	120 40%	58 19.3%	23 7.6%	2.9	0.62
2.	Giving adequate punishment to guilty lecturers and students as well as other parties involved directly or indirectly on the issue of sex for grade	141 47%	111 37%	10 3.3%	38 12.7%	3.2	0.61
3.	Enforcing regulations about mode of dressing for all students in order to discourage female students from putting on indecent dressing.	78 26%	90 30%	45 15%	87 29%	2.5	0.50
4.	Ensuring that lecturers are made aware of the implications of engaging in sex with students ahead of time by the university authorities will help reduced the rate of sex for grade menace	87 29%	145 48.3%	51 17%	17 5.7%	3.0	0.61
5.	Dismissals of both lecturers and students when found guilty should be applied to reduce the rate of sex for grade menace.	105 35%	107 35.7%	34 11.3%	54 18%	2.9	0.69

In Table 3 above, mean scores 2.51, 2.94, 3.14, 3.0 and 3.2 are all above the cut-off point of 2.50, this indicates that all the items are accepted by the respondents. The standard deviation of 0.50 to 0.69 implies that the respondents are close in their responses.

Discussions

Following the findings of the study, it is discovered that indecent dressing of the female undergraduates is one of the major factors that attracted male lecturers to female students. The finding is in line with the result of Udechukwu, Nwankwo, and Okeke (2020) who submit that nudity and wrong peer influence cause sex-for-grade in institutions. Other factors that contribute to the menace of sex-for-grade as seen in the study include keeping close intimacy with male lecturers, quest for academic favour from male lecturers, direct approach by students to lecturer and also students who are naturally endowed with physical features are easily attracted to male lecturers. The findings are in harmonious with the findings of Imonikhe, Idogho and Aluede (2011) who reveal that direct approach by student to lecturer in readiness to offer sex for grades, genuine love relationships between student and lecturer and failure of the university systems regarding sexual harassment policies are the causes of sex for marks on African university campuses. The finding also is in agreement with the findings of Taiwo, Omole, and Omole, (2014) whose findings revealed that some female students who are lazy in their studies sometimes motivate the male lecturers into an unethical relationship with a view to “use what they have to get what they want”, which is a common slogan among such female students who will not attend classes, sit for any form of assessment and would desire to pass their examinations.

The findings of the study revealed that the phenomenon ‘sex-for-grade’ leads to indiscipline among female students, discourages female students from reading and studying effectively, discourages female students from paying attention in the classroom, makes female students to skip classes and enhances the reduction of female students’ zeal to participate in academic activities. The findings corroborate with the findings of Ekundayo and Akinsuroju (2022),

who opined that students who were weak academically equally offered their bodies in exchange for marks in our higher institutions. Africa Polling Institute, API (2019) also sought to understand the reason for the prevalence of rape and sexual abuse on Nigerian campuses. In responses gotten by the institute, 63% of respondents (who were students) ascribed the prevalence to the increased rate of “inappropriate and indecent dressing”, especially by female students on campuses, and indiscipline on the part of some students and lecturers. Also, moral weakness on the part of both parties (male lecturers and female students) and lack of self-discipline among lecturers and students are other drivers of sex in exchange for marks in Nigerian higher institutions (Ibrahim, Sogbanmu, Omoju, & Ukwaja, 2020, cited in Ekundayo & Akinsuroju, 2022).

The findings also showed various strategic measures that could be adopted in order to reduce the menace of sex-for-grade. The various strategies as seen in the study include organizing seminars for lecturers and students on dangers of sex-for-grade, giving adequate punishment to guilty lecturers and female students, enforcing regulations about mode of dressing for all students, enacting rules on relationship of lecturers and students. The findings corroborate with the finding of API (2019) which says that there should be public enlightenment and advocacy against sexual harassment, restriction of indecent and inappropriate dressing, especially on campuses, strict prosecution of sexual abuse offenders, and enforcement of strict policies and guidelines aimed at curbing sexual harassment incidences on campus. Jobslolly (2021) also suggested that government should intervene through its legislative arm recommended prosecuting and sentencing any higher education institution staff found guilty of sexual offence up to 14 years imprisonment. It should be noted that not only members of staff should be prosecuted if found guilty, any student found guilty should be highly punished too.

Conclusion

The study reveals that female students contribute greatly to the prevalence of sex-for-grade in tertiary institutions. It has been

discovered that female students contribute to the increase of this menace with their mode of dressing. Many female students in tertiary institutions dress indecently; flaunting precious body parts they are supposed to cover to male lecturers trying to give what they have (their bodies) to get the grade they want. The study also reveals that the thought of sex-for-grade in the minds of female undergraduates has encouraged indiscipline among them. Many female undergraduates think that there is no need of going to classes or studying since they have body to offer for grades. To stop this menace, management of institutions were advised to organize seminars for both lecturers and students on the dangers of sex-for-grade and adequate punishment should be given to both lecturers and students found guilty of this menace.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended universities should organize seminars to all students, especially female students on the dangers of sex-for-grade on their self-esteem, studies and future. Regulations about lecturers' and students' relationship should be well defined and published by all universities. Lecturers are not to relate with students sensually. The relationship of students and lecturers should be well spelt out in the university and college handbooks and it should be enforced. Universities in Nigeria should make it a priority to have units under Students' Affairs Division that will be responsible for receiving students' complaints on sexual harassment cases. Good supervision of lecturers as well as students, and open communication channels between students and school authorities should be made available. Counseling units in the institutions should be functioning and accessible for students, especially female undergraduates. There they can get necessary guidance and pieces of advice on their studies.

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