

**CAUSES, TYPES AND CONSEQUENCES OF SEX-FOR-GRADES IN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN ANAMBRA STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING**

**BY**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the causes, types and consequences of sex-for-grades institutions of higher learning in Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. A total population of 2500 comprising 1221 male and 1279 female was selected through systematic sampling who took part in a cross-sectional survey. Moreover, a semi-structured, self-administered questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The average age bracket of the respondents was 23 years. Also a significant pattern of the sex-for-grade occurrence was said to have been initiated from male lecturers to female students. Nudity and wrong peer influence were also seen as causing sex-for-grades in institutions of higher learning. Ignorant and uneducated graduates were rated highest as consequences of sex for grade on the victims. Hence, it was recommended amongst others, that sustainable systems and structures are put in place to curtail the incidence, also whistleblowers can also be use to fish out and investigate the culprits.*

**Keywords:** *Sex-for-grades, Sexual harassment, Sexual abuse, Nudity/Indecent dressing*

**Introduction**

The Holy Bible says that in the beginning God created male and female and gave them charge to go into the world and be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. It is therefore a general knowledge that whatsoever setting or environment male and females interact, there will be some level of sexual advances. These modes of sexual interest between men and women/ boys and girls can be observed between medical doctors and nurses on the one hand and between medical doctors and nurses and their patients (opposite sex) on the other hand. It can also be seen between the clergies and worshippers. It can also be seen between managers and secretaries etc. Hence in an editorial, Madubuko (2019) affirmed that “across the nation’s tertiary institutions, the public service, the police, the armed forces, politics- all strata of the society-sexual exploitation and gender-based violence have taken deep root”. There is however nothing that will make or justify immorality, sexual harassment, lasciviousness and/ or sex-for-grades a welcome development. However, this writer states that it is not a new phenomenon in the Nigerian nay, world social milieu. It has therefore over the years acquired numerous labels such as sexual abuse, sexual harassment, gender-based violence(GBV), sexual exploitation, office romance, sex-for-marks, sex-for-admission, sex-for-employment to mention but a few.

This misbehaviour, which obviously is antisocial and amorous has over the years been seen as old habits that will never die. However, previous researches carried out on this subject have produced numerous definitions of the concepts used. For instance, sexual harassment has been defined as unsolicited, unwelcome and unreciprocated sexual overture from a person to elicit unwanted sexual relations from another person. This includes inappropriate sexual overture, subtle and unsubtle persistent behaviour, assault and actual sexual abuse that may be expressed physically, verbally or nonverbally, usually from someone with higher power or at a vantage position to less privileged person (Aluede, 2000). In the same vein, sex-for-grades as the name implies, is a situation where a lecturer (usually male lecturer) verbally or

behaviourally informs the female student that he is ready, willing and capable of enhancing her marks, scores and grades from both the continuous assessment and examination proper, if only she is willing to “sleep” with him before, during and /or after the final examination. In other words, it is a phenomenon of using what you have to get what you need to the satisfaction of both parties.

It is however, important to note that oftentimes sex-for-grades is initiated by some lazy female students through indecent dressing, constant and frequent visits to lecturers’ offices and unnecessary exposure of their “vital” body organs to the lecturers, especially when both of them are alone. While the male lecturers use their vantage positions of power, intimidation, cajoling, coercion and actual marking down or out rightly, in extreme cases, causing the students involved to fail where she appears to say no to their lewd requests. The students who intends to succumb to sex-for-grades use the instrumentality of subtle urging, loitering round the concerned lecturer, dressing in the rude, constant visitation to his office, text messages, gifts, and suggestive but “innocent” statement with multiple interpretations.

### **Causes of Sex-for-Grades in the Nation’s Institutions of Higher Learning**

The researchers have articulated some of the causes of sex for grades in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria to be the following:

A brief explanation will situate these factors and make them clearer to the reader

1. **Poor moral Upbringing:** The upbringing of the child is the responsibilities of adult persons in the life of the child. In some cases the biological parents are morally bankrupt both in words and actions and essentially lack the fear of God in their dealings with their fellow human beings. This child, when grown whether as a student or lecturer will demonstrate immorality at the slightest opportunity.
2. **Peer Influence:** It is normal for age mates, school mates and classmates to influence one another. This tendency affects mostly that person (irrespective of his/her status) with weak ego and acute inferiority complex to feel lost in the crowd because he/she is not doing what others are doing. Following from the above, a student with weak ego/inferiority complex will follow the steps of fellow students who are practicing sex-for- grades as a way of passing her examinations and making good grades.
3. **Academic laziness:** Academic laziness on the part of most students will certainly lead the female ones to pay amorous visits to the lecturer’s office with the intention of seducing him while the male students will resort to payment of money-for-grades popularly called “sorting”.
4. **Vicarious learning:** This is an observational learning that takes place as a result of what happens to, or the consequences of, the action on the performer. In other words, if a female students who indulge in sex-for- grades comes up with an “A’ grade, the other female students will learn to do the same thing because of observed result of the student who practiced sex-for-grades.
5. **Indecent dressing:** Indecent dressing is where a female student dresses in a way that exposes her breasts, hip and backside, including her legs. This type of nakedness suggests that the student is working for ‘something’, especially when she visits a lecturer dresses indecently.
6. **Emphasis on certificate:** This over-emphasis on certificates can spur a student to go the extra mile and do anything just to grab a certificate since that is what the employers of labour are asking for.
7. **Social media/ ICT:** The T.V handset, especially the social media and ICT have enhanced information crises-crossing between students and their lecturers hence a student after exams can call or text his lecturer or vice versa.

### **Types of Sex-for-Grades**

Sex-for-grades has eaten deep into the fabric of our institutions of higher learning and many of such work in settings where males and females interact. In Universities and other institutions, it has assumed an epidemic dimension, especially in Nigeria. This is because of too much emphasis on certificates, and more especially where some blue chip companies put their employment bench marks at second class upper division (as minimum employment requirement). The phenomenon is however, not limited to Nigeria. This is because Universities in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania have all integrated sex-for grades into course modules on gender, power and sex to address the challenges of male lecturers

demanding sex from female students in exchange for grades. Glaser and Thorpe's (1986) investigation among psychology students in the United States of America showed a higher prevalence of sexual harassment and unethical intimacy between post-graduate students due to frequent face-to-face interaction when consulting their supervisors for counseling on their research studies.

Types of sex-for-grades are numerous and this researcher derived them from trends of occurrence in our institutions of higher and they include the following:

1. **Sexual Mutual Agreement:** This is the type of sexuality where the lecturer and the student agree by physical, verbal and emotional mutuality to do and exchange sex-for-grades.
2. **Rape:** Some lecturers interpret some behaviours of their students for sexual invitation. Therefore, when they invite the students and start making advances. Where the student begins to resist, the lecturer may go ahead to force himself on the student, and tearing her under wears in the process. This is rape.
3. **Sexual battery:** The act of intentionally striking the student in the hotel room or his house to frighten and weaken her into submission to sexual act is sexual battery.
4. **Sexual threat:** Here lecturers who have violent personality, structure, or those who received training in the act of violence including former cult members who find themselves in positions of power and authority as lecturers resort to threat when a female student tries to resist them. This may include threat to submit or fail their papers.
5. **Sexual group/peers:** These are students who observe their peer members go out with lecturers and score high grades. They decide to join the sexual escapades with lecturers so as to make their own high grades.
6. **Sexual modelling from parents:** Students, who enter the Universities and other higher institutions of learning not on merit but through the interventions of their parents, believe that they must achieve success by cutting corners, are known to have got the sex modeling inclination from their parents. After all, daddy and mummy do not leave things to chance.
7. **Sexual opportunists:** These include those lecturers and students who use their former relationships with each other coming from the same town, living in the same streets, family friends between both parties and/or being members of the same church before arriving at the institutions of higher learning. Using this as a pretext to exploit the other, some lectures take this as a sure way for the exploitation of female students. It is important to note that until recently, cases of sexual exploitation as listed above are largely not reported for obvious reasons, which include fear of negative and destructive publicity and reprisals.

### Consequences of Sex for Grades

The evils attendant to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence are legion and staggeringly detrimental both to the victim and the society at large. A victim of rape or other sexual abuse loses their self-worth; they suffer acute mental torture and psychological humiliation. In addition to being susceptible to contracting venereal and other sex-related maladies. One cannot rule out unwanted pregnancies, truncated academic career, depression and even suicide. Some writers tag the sexploitation. Right inside the campuses, sex for grade students' move around with the air and swagger of having superiority complex and look down on their studious counterparts. They move around with a lot of confidence and observed braggadocio implying whether they study their books or not, they must pass their examinations. Hence, they go to party, travel for weekends and of course, sleep for hours when they are supposed to study their books, do their assignments and other assignments.

On the societal level, sex-for-marks students, on graduation, would simply mean releasing into the society a bunch of ignorant and unqualified professional and this would amount to a homicide mission. The society will be the worse for it, including even the perpetrators of this debased and dishonourable act, and their offspring and relations as it amounts to throwing stone into a market place (Madubuko, 2019). Taiwo, Omole and Omole (2014) in their study found that some of the psychological impacts of sexual harassment include but not restricted to the fact that "sexual harassment undermines the integrity of the academic environment and it prevents its victims from achieving their full potential. For instance,

graduates with certificates obtained through sex-for- grades or sexual consent are not worth the certificates they have been conferred with. This is clearly demonstrated in the performance of the half-baked graduates released into the labour market in recent times.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes, types and consequences of sex for grades in institutions of higher learning in Anambra State. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. ascertain the causes of sex- for-grades in higher institutions in Anambra State.
2. determine the types of sex-for-grades that exists among students in institutions of higher learning.
3. examine the consequences of sex-for-grads on the society.

### Research Questions

- i. What are the causes of sex-for grades in higher institutions in Anambra State?
- ii. What are the trends of sex-for-grades that exists among students in institutions of higher learning?
- iii. What are the consequences of sex-for grades on the society?

### Methodology

A cross-sectional design was adopted with the use of random sampling techniques to select 2500 students from five higher institutions in Anambra State. This design allowed the researcher to establish the various causes of sex-for-grades, and the perceived social-demographic characteristics of respondents, as well as the trend of occurrence. The population of the study comprised the entire students across faculties in the Universities, schools in Polytechnics and schools of Agriculture, Business Education, Education, Fine and Applied Arts, School of Sciences, School of Industrial Technical Education in Colleges of Education, among the selected higher institutions in Anambra State. The sampling method was a multi-stage random sampling method, which was used in selecting five out of ten public and privately-owned institutions of higher learning in Anambra State. Fifty students each were selected from ten facilities/schools/courses of study to make 500 students from each institution. In all, a total of 2500 students who agreed participated in the study. A self-designed, well-structured questionnaire with six clusters (themes) and seven items in each cluster was distributed to the respondents. The clusters include: socio-demographic data, incidence of sex for grades trends of occurrence of sex-for-grades, causes of sex-for-grades, perceived ways of overcoming the problem, and consequences of sex for grade. The instrument culled from the works of Taiwo et al. (2014) was validated through a test-re-test method. A Cronbach's Alpha result showed a validity of 0.79, which is high enough for administration. Data from the respondent will be analyzed using frequency and simple percentage.

### Results

#### Research Question 1: What are the causes of sex for grades in higher institutions?

**Table 1: Causes of sex for grades in higher institutions**

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Poor moral upbringing	1375	55%
2	Peer Influence	300	12%
3	Indecent dressing/ nudity	500	20%
4	Academic laziness of female students	125	5%
5	Vicarious learning	125	5%
6	Emphasis on certificates	75	3%

Table 1 shows the various causes of sex-for-marks/ grade, poor moral upbringing with 55% was rated very high among the causes. Moreover, peer influence is 12%, indecent dressing/nudity represents stand at 20%. Whereas female students' academic laziness and vicarious learning each has 5% over emphasis on certificate has the least rating of 3%.

**Research Question 2: What are the trends of occurrence of sex-for-grades?****Table 2: Trends of occurrence of sex-for-grades**

S/N	Trends of occurrence	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male lecturers to female students	2470	98.8%
2	Female students to male lecturers	1389	55.6%
3	Female workers to male lecturers on behalf of children & relations	1975	79%
4	Female lecturers to male students	1560	62.4%

Table 2 above shows a trend analysis which indicates that the common most occurring trend of sex-for-grades is from male lecturer to female students, spurred through nude and indecent dressing and sexual signals at 98.8%. Other trends are from female students to male lecturers which are 62%. Female workers to male lecturers on behalf of their children and relations are 79%. Female lecturers to male students accounts for 55.6%. The above trends show that female students seem to be more at risk of sex-grades-in our institutions of higher learning.

**Research question 3: What are the consequences of sex for grades /marks?****Table 3: Consequences of sex for grades /marks**

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Lack of self- worth	300	12%
2	Braggadocio/Superiority complex	1375	55%
3	Contraction of sexually -transmitted diseases	125	5%
4	Unwanted pregnancies	75	3%
5	Drop out from school	125	5%
6	Mental torture/ loss of integrity	500	20%

Table 3 above shows the consequences of sex-for -grades as rated in its order of relevance to the respondents. More that rated half of the respondents is 55% while rated superiority complex/ braggadocio as the highest consequence. Other factors include mental torture/ loss of integrity 20%. Lack of self worth, 12%. Contraction of sexually transmitted disease (STDs) and dropping out of school each has 5%.

**Discussion**

The respondents agreed that poor moral up bring with 1375 representing 55% of the respondents, indecent dressing/ nudity with 500 respondents representing 20% and peer influence with 300 respondents representing 12% were among the perceived causes of sex-for-grades in institutions of higher learning in Anambra State. This can be attributed to the development of many mega cities in the state such as Awka, Onitsha, Nnewi, Ekwulobia, Umunze Igbariam with each and every listed town hosting one higher institution or the other. Moreover other factors like academic laziness of the female students and vicarious learning each with 125 respondents representing 5% respectively while emphasis on certificates has 75 respondents representing 3%.

Research question 2 showing trends of occurrence of sex-for- grade indicates that the common most occurring trend is from male lecturers to female students. This has 2470 respondents representing 98.8%. Other trends are from female students to male lecturers with 62%. All said and done the above trends show that female students seem to be more at risk of sex-for-grades in institutions of higher learning.

Research questions 3 which deals with consequences of sex-for-grades indicates that amongst the perceived consequences are braggacio/superiority complex, with 1375(55%), loss of integrity and mental

torture with 500 respondent (20%) and lack of self worth with 300 (12%). Other consequences are contraction of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) school drop – out and unwanted pregnancies with 125(5%), 125 (5%) and 75 (3%) respectively.

### Conclusion

Sex- for- grades is described as a common “Culture” that thrives without any qualms in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. It touches all and sundry. This is because sooner than later, your daughter, sister, wife niece and/ or sister in-law will be involved in the misbehaviour. This is why all hands must be on deck to curb the menace before it brings down the more our educational standard and drag our ivory tower to the mud from its perceived Olympian heights.

### Recommendations

1. Causes of sex-for – grades must be thoroughly investigated and until when it’s proved beyond all reasonable doubts, no punishment shall be meted onto the accused. However where the case is proved beyond reasonable doubts that grades were awarded in exchange for sex, the accused should not only be dismissed but the grades cancelled outrightly
2. Furthermore the letter of dismissal should be copied to the president general (PG) of his/her commonly to read during commonly meetings. This will serve as a deterrent to others that have not been caught
3. The rules prohibiting midity in institutions of higher learning should be implemented to the letters, and where possible, management of institutions of higher learning should introduce departmental wears for the students and enforce that the students wear it when in the institutions environment
4. The punishment should not only be on lecturers but also on randy managers, priest/clergies, doctors etc. this is because there are all professional misconduct irrespective of the settings
5. Universities management should hold general discussion intermittently with students and lecturers on the held for strict observance of code of conduct, rules and regulations, to serve as a constant reminder for maintenance of standard core values and the sanctity of the ivory towers.

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