

# Assessment of Gender Differences among Secondary School Students on Social Vices in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja.

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803181>

Received: 16 March 2024; Accepted: 29 March 2024; Published: 22 April 2024

## ABSTRACT

This study examined how secondary school students in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, perceived gender differences in social vices. The study used a mixed approach method. A sample of 300 respondents were drawn from both the senior and junior secondary school levels, and the population were all students attending secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Fifty respondents were chosen from each of the six secondary schools from which samples were drawn; however, ten individuals failed to return their questionnaires. The study's schools and participants were chosen using simple stratified random sampling procedures. To gather data on social vices in secondary schools, a self-designed instrument was employed. A significance threshold of 0.05 was used to assess two hypotheses and three research questions. To address the research question, t-test statistics were employed, and two hypotheses were tested using mean, standard deviation, t-value, and p-value. The findings showed that students' perceptions of social vices were comparable throughout the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Also, it demonstrated that while gender had no discernible impact on the social vices' students committed, males were more likely than females to participate in certain categories of social vices. Additionally, the results showed that male students had a higher propensity than female students for aggressive social vices. To help students learn how to behave properly in and out of the classroom, it has recommended among other things that school administrators and other educational stakeholders organize seminars and workshops on the risk of social vices. Additionally, parents should be educated on how to properly care for and raise their children and dependents.

**Keywords:** Assessment, gender differences, male and females, secondary school students, social vices

## INTRODUCTION

Gender is a reliable predictor of social vices, with males being more likely to engage in criminal behaviours than females, and also doing so more frequently (Steffensmeier & Schwartz, 2009). Gender differences in social vices behaviour can be observed in all major sources of criminological data, including official records, victimization reports, and self-report surveys (Lo & Zhong, 2006). These differences, however, are not uniform across all types of offences and are especially pronounced for serious and violent crimes.

In recent years, researchers, policymakers, and educators have been paying increasing attention to the impact of gender differences among secondary school students on social vices. The relationship between gender and social vices is a complex one, influenced by a range of factors that shape the behaviour of young people in educational settings. Understanding how gender affects vulnerability to, engagement in, and perpetuation of social vices is crucial for designing effective interventions and strategies to address these issues (Allen, Chango, Szvedo, Schad, & Marston 2012).

Gender differences refers to the range of gender identities, expressions, and roles that exist beyond the traditional binary understanding of male and female. Secondary school students are at a critical developmental stage where questions of identity, belonging, and social acceptance play a significant role in shaping their behaviours and attitudes. Social vices, on the other hand, encompass a wide range of negative behaviours and activities that are detrimental to individuals, communities, and society at large. These may include substance abuse, bullying, violence, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, and other forms of delinquent behaviours.

Gender differences and equality are fundamental aspects of education. In secondary schools, fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values all students, regardless of their gender, is crucial. This article aims to explore the impact of gender differences on social vices among secondary school students. By examining the prevalence of social vices and their connection to gender norms, one can develop strategies to promote a safer and more supportive learning environment. ( Ferfolja & Ullman, 2020)

Gender is one of such factors also mentioned in the literature to have considerable effects on social vices. The spectrum of an individual's physical, biological, mental, and behavioural traits that identify and distinguish between the feminine and masculine (female and male) populations is known as their gender. (Bosson, Taylor & Prewitt-Freilino 2006)

The impact of social vices on secondary school students goes beyond individual behaviour and can have far-reaching consequences for academic achievement, mental health, and overall well-being. Understanding the intersection of gender differences and social vices is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support systems that can address the unique challenges faced by diverse student populations.

This paper aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of gender differences among secondary school students and its implications for social vices. By synthesizing existing research findings, examining case studies, and engaging with stakeholders in the education sector, one seeks to shed light on the complex interplay between gender differences and social vices in educational settings. Through this analysis, the researcher hoped to inform evidence-based strategies and policies that promote inclusivity, equity, and safety for all students, regardless of their gender identity.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Secondary schools in Nigeria play a vital role in shaping students' minds and preparing them for adulthood. However, they face several challenges due to prevalent social vices in society. These social vices not only hinder effective teaching and learning experiences but also raise concerns about students' academic performance and well-being. One critical issue is the lack of comprehensive research on how gender differences influence the prevalence and perception of these social vices in Abuja's secondary schools. This gap impedes the development of interventions to address issues such as gender-based violence and substance abuse. It emphasizes the need to explore the intersection of gender differences and social vices to create a safe learning environment. Despite efforts to implement curricula that promote positive behaviours in secondary schools, there is still a noticeable gap in understanding the effectiveness of these curricula in shaping students' behaviours. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the gender impact on students' behavioral tendencies and identify areas for improvement to create a more inclusive educational environment.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to delve into the intricate relationship between gender differences and social vices among secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja. By examining the

prevalence of social vices and their connection to gender norms, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the differences in students' perceptions of social vices based on gender.
2. To find out the types of social vices that secondary school students engaged in based on their gender.
3. To investigate the factors that contribute to the participation of male and female students in social vices.

### **Research Question:**

1. Are there significant differences in how male and female students perceive social vices in their school environment?
2. What types of social vices will secondary school students engage in based on their gender?
3. What factors contribute to the observed gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices?

### **Hypothesis**

1. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):

There is no significant gender-based differences in students' perceptions of social vices.

2. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):

There is no significant difference in the engagement of male and female students with social vices.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Gender**

Gender is an intricate notion that includes a variety of roles, identities, and social, cultural, and personal contexts that are connected to being male or female. The physical traits that separate males and females, such as their chromosomal composition and reproductive organs, are referred to as biological sex.

Academic and scientific circles have extensively discussed the idea of gender based on biological sex. While more recent research indicates that gender is a multidimensional construct impacted by a mix of biological, psychological, and social elements, traditional perspectives have maintained a clear relationship between gender and biological sex. Fausto-Sterling's (2000) work, for instance, challenges binary ideas of male and female by suggesting that biological sex is not as simple as previously thought and that a range of intersex abnormalities exist. This suggests that there is a more nuanced link than previously believed between biological sex and gender.

Krieger's (2003) research also emphasises the influence of cultural norms and socialisation on gender identification. A person's biological sex may not necessarily coincide with the gender norms that have developed as a result of the institutional and cultural reinforcement of gender roles, behaviours, and expectations.

Ultimately, gender is a dynamic and multidimensional construct that is impacted by a variety of elements outside of biology, even while biological sex can have an impact on some aspects of gender identity. Gaining further insight into the intricacies of gender and its connection to biological sex requires further

investigation and study of these variables.

## **Social Vices**

The Latin term “vitium,” which denotes a defect or imperfection, is the source of the English word “vices”. They call it a habit or immoral behaviour. Prostitution, unsuitable dress, robbery, cultism, pocket-picking, drug addiction, test fraud, hooliganism, and thuggery are vices that secondary school students are involved in regularly. Having sex before marriage, gambling, smoking, using illegal drugs, rape, and drinking are examples of further vices. To Gomez-Bravo (2020), social vices are evil, harmful behaviours that are disapproved of by society as a whole. A social vice is an activity that deviates from the standards of morality. Students frequently engage in vices such as prostitution, indecent attire, robbery, cultism, pocket-picking, drug addiction, examination malpractice, hooliganism, thuggery, gambling, smoking, premarital sex, and rape (Asmau, 2020).

Social vices are defined by Omonijo, Nnedum, Fadugba, Uche and Biereenu-Nnabugwu (2013) as behaviours that violate established cultural norms and rules of behaviour within a certain society, set of circumstances, or geography. People who behave badly or are socially uncomfortable are the source of social vices. In this paper, the term “social vices” refers to unsightly characters, bad attitudes, and inappropriate behaviours that have impeded the advancement of Nigeria’s educational system. Social vices are despised in every culture because they are unwanted traits detrimental to a country’s development, peace, and progress.

A dysfunctional home, a lack of parental participation, poverty, peer pressure, unemployment, unhealthy imitation of the industrialised world, economic slump, societal pressure, impatience, or the ambition to become someone else can all cause students to engage in social vices. Elujekwute, Danburam, Zakariah, and James, (2021) discovered several similar social vices among youth and students on various campuses, including cultism, exam cheating, drug usage, and sexual immorality. These social vices have an impact on both individuals and society as a whole.

The destruction of innocent individuals, garages, market centres, and neighbouring towns due to social vices also impedes national progress, according to Obodoada, Nwachukwu and Egbezor (2015). This social instability occurs both within and outside of schools. Social vices including rape, abduction, drug usage, provocative attire, murders, and cultism on radio, newspapers, and social media to Lukman (2021), are blatant signs that the nation has lost its pre-independence respect from other nations. Given that the youth of Nigeria is meant to be the backbone of the nation, it is understandable that President Buhari would call them “lazy youths”.

To bolster the idea that social vices are universal, Apase and Fawe (2019) claimed that social vices transcend ethnic and even religious differences. In Nigeria, there have been several deaths of innocent civilians and military personnel in recent times, despite concerning trends among youth, particularly among secondary and college students, and the incapacity of stakeholders to curtail the threat inside the Nigerian system.

## **Common Perspectives on Differences in Criminal and Social vices Based on Gender**

### **Learning Theory**

Learning theories argue that people who engage in social vices are likely to be exposed to positive ideas about social vices, befriend others who model anti-social behaviours, and be reinforced for committing crimes. The gender difference in social vices can largely be explained by the fact that males are more prone than females to be exposed to and believe in delinquent behaviour. Studying the difference between the

social vices of males and females, however, has proven difficult (Akers, 2009).

Whereas feminine identities stress prudence, empathy, and submissiveness, masculine identities place more emphasis on strength, competition, and being daring. People tend to see themselves more in stereotypically masculine terms when they are males, and stereotypically feminine terms when they are female. This helps to explain why social vices differ according to gender (Jensen 2003). Gender disparities in social vices and delinquency may be explained by a learning-based theory that holds that men and women are differently exposed to and reinforced by definitions and reinforcements associated with crime, as well as differently sensitive to certain aspects of this learning process. Female social vices are more strongly influenced by other possible criticism because girls are socialised to be more other-focused and relationship-oriented than boys. Furthermore, Lee and Wong's research (2020) highlighted how media and role models influence teenagers' attitudes and actions. They emphasised on how media and the role models that young people see and emulate have an impact on how teenagers see the world and behave.

It is stated that feminine identities emphasise empathy, caution, and submissiveness, whereas masculine identities emphasise power, courage, and competition. These ideas are supported by empirical evidence that indicate a greater risk of violent offences and aggressive intents among males (Beesley & McGuire, 2009 and Coleman, Goldman, & Kugler, 2009) among individuals who identify as masculine gender-role identity owners. In addition, research has shown that both male and female students can engage in bullying behaviours; however, males are more likely to engage in physical bullying, while females may be more prone to relational aggression. Additionally, women are more likely than men to engage in relationally aggressive behaviours like gossiping and spreading rumours. (Beesley & McGuire, 2009 and Coleman, Goldman, & Kugler, 2009). Other research reveals that stereotypes about males' and females' self-perceptions are more likely to be associated with masculine and feminine stereotypes, respectively, and that these discrepancies in self-perception help to explain some of the gender differences in social vices (Jensen, 2003).

This claim received some support, according to Heimer's (2006) analysis of National Youth Survey data. When it comes to giving in to peer pressure and cultural tendencies to indulge in social vices, research has indicated that gender differences do not exist when it comes to the effect of delinquent peers (Alarid, Burton & Cullen 2000 and Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter & Silva 2001). It has been documented by others that males are more likely than girls to engage in social vices when surrounded by delinquent peers (Piquero, Gover, MacDonald, & Piquero, 2010). In their study, Mears, Ploeger and Warr (2018), females are more likely than males to hold beliefs that discourage criminal behaviours. This gender difference may explain why peer behaviour has a stronger influence on male delinquency than on female delinquency.

## Control Theory

Unlike learning theory, control theories propose that men commit social vices at higher rates than women because they have fewer social ties to the community, receive less external supervision or discipline from parents and other authority figures, and thus have less self-control than women (Costello & Mederer, 2003). The social control theory's explanations for the gender difference in social vices are somewhat supported by the available research. Juvenile men, for instance, are often less dedicated to or tied to traditional institutions like schools, less closely linked to conventional people, and less closely watched by parents than their female counterparts (Costello & Mederer, 2003). However, though studies show that men's poorer social ties may contribute to some of their increased delinquency, they may not entirely explain the gender differences in criminal behaviour (Booth, Farrell, & Varano, 2008).

In early infancy, self-control is developed by regular parental monitoring and punishment of incorrect behaviour, according to Booth, Farrell, and Varano's (2008) general theory of social vices. These theories



contend that social vices develop when people with poor self-control come across chances for illegal activity and that interpersonal disparities in self-control hold steady beyond the first ten years of life. Since girls are more frequently disciplined for breaking rules than boys. Booth, Farrell, and Varano's (2008) argue that gender disparities in social vices also reflect gender differences in parental punishment. As a result, females are likely to acquire stronger levels of self-control than boys. These claims are somewhat supported by certain actual data. For instance, Svensson (2013) discovered that when parental monitoring was taken into account, gender disparities in adolescent drug and alcohol use were dramatically decreased. Parental monitoring was also shown to be strongly connected with juvenile drug and alcohol use. Burton, Cullen, Evans, Alarid, & Dunaway (1998) looked specifically at the function of self-control in the gender gap and found that gender disparities in a 20-item scale of adults' self-reported social vices were completely explained when self-control was included in the statistical model (Higgins & Tewksbury, 2006).

Nevertheless, some research indicates that even after controlling for self-control, men are still more likely to commit violent crimes and property social vices (Kaplan & Lui, 2006). Additionally, research suggests that parenting may have a substantial impact on criminal activity even after controlling for self-control (Rebellon, Straus, & Medieros, 2008). These findings imply that the gender disparity in social vices is not fully explained by self-control and that, in addition, direct factors such as parenting may increase gender disparities in crime above and beyond the moderating effect of self-control.

In conclusion, the gender disparity in social vices has been explained by several variables linked to the most popular theories of social vices. While self-control, parental supervision, and peer associations with criminal histories can explain a significant fraction of this difference, they cannot consistently explain the gender difference in social vice offending (Agnew, 2009).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a mixed method research methodology. This method of doing research helped the researcher to analyse and explain quantitative results. Creswell (2013), assert that the process involves collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data.

### **Population and Sampling Technique**

The population of the study consisted of all secondary school students within the Federal Capital Territory. A simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 290 students for the study selected from various secondary schools in the region. The participants included 152 male students and 138 female students from different grades, ranging from JSS1 to SS3.

### **Data Collection**

After seeking written consent from selected school heads and respondents, data collection process was embarked upon by the researcher and the research assistants. To gather information from 290 secondary school students. A questionnaire and interview methodology were employed. The Likert scale, with four points, was used to organise the questions. A thorough comprehension of the quantitative data was attained through the utilisation of the interview methodology. A pilot study and Cronbach's alpha were used to assess reliability; the results showed a value of 0.812, a value that denoted robustness. The validity was evaluated using face and content validity, and the dependability, transferability, confirmability, and member verification procedures were followed to guarantee the reliability of the qualitative data.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics, including means, and standard deviation, were calculated for each gender group. T-

tests analyses were utilized to compare gender differences in social vices and assess the contributing factors for social vices among the secondary school students. Narrative analysis, a systematic method for organising and condensing material, was used in the analysis of qualitative data. Using this type of analysis, the final report was coherently structured and aligned with the study’s objectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Research Question 1

Are there significant differences in how male and female students perceive social vices in their school environment?

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation and t-test results of Gender differences on perception of social services in school environment

S/N	Perceptions	Gender	Mean	St.d	t-value	p-value
1	Peer pressure plays a significant role in influencing students to engage in social vices.	Male	3.53	1.32	0.5530	0.5807
		Female	3.44	1.44		
2	Gender plays a significant role in the prevalence of social vices in society	Male	3.43	1.56	0.1954	0.8452
		Female	3.47	1.92		
3	Gender differences impact the types of social vices individuals engage in	Male	4.22	0.78	0.7035	0.4823
		Female	4.28	0.66		
4	Social vices hinder the academic or career progression of males and females.	Male	3.67	1.11	0.1229	1.5473
		Female	3.89	1.31		
5	Social vices like drug abuse, bullying, and theft are prevalent among peers	Male	3.95	0.43	1.0038	0.3163
		Female	4.00	0.40		
6	There is a need for more education and awareness programme to address social vices within the student community	Male	3.69	0.61	1.1485	0.2517
		Female	3.77	0.57		
	<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>3.74</b>	<b>0.97</b>	<b>0.5058</b>	<b>0.6134</b>
		<b>Female</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>1.05</b>		

From Table 1 above, it showed that with an average mean of 3.74 for male respondents and 3.80 for female respondents, all the items were accepted by all the participants as perception of social vices. The data collected from male and female students regarding gender differences impacting types of social vices shows

that both genders have similar perceptions. On average, item 3, Gender differences impact the types of social vices individuals engage in, was rated by both males and females as the item with the highest mean (males mean=4.22 vs females mean=4.28). Females rated the prevalence of social vices among peers slightly higher than males (4.00 vs. 3.95), while females also perceived social vices to have a slightly greater impact on academic/career progression (3.89 vs. 3.67). However, both genders recognized the need for education and awareness programmes to address social vices (male’s mean= 3.6 vs female’s mean= 3.77) and agreed on the influence of gender on the prevalence of social vices in society. Overall, the differences in means between male and female responses were minimal, ranging from 0.04 to 0.22. This indicated that while there were some variations in perceptions, both genders generally shared similar views on the influence of gender on social vices.

**Hypothesis**

1. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):

There is no significant gender-based differences in students’ perceptions of social vices.

2. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):

There is no significant difference in the engagement of male and female students with social vices.

Table 2: t-value results of Gender differences on perception of social services in school environment

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit t-value	P-value
Male	152	3.74	0.97	288	0.8430	1.96	0.3999
Female	138	3.80	1.05				

Table 2 indicates that the calculated t-value is 0.8430, which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96. Additionally, the p-value is 0.3999, which is greater than the standard significance level of 0.05.

These results indicated that the difference in perceptions between genders was not statistically significant, meaning any observed difference is likely due to random chance rather than a true difference in perceptions. Therefore, the researcher maintained the null hypothesis.

Research Question 2: Are there any gender-specific patterns or differences in the types of social vices engaged in by students?

Table 3. Comparing mean, standard deviation of gender-specific patterns or differences in the types of social vices engaged in by students.

	Types of Social Vices	Gender	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I engage in violent social vices	Male	4.72	0.54	Accepted
		Female	2.68	1.12	Accepted
2	I participate in gossiping and spreading rumors as social vices	Male	2.71	1.32	Accepted
		Female	4.61	0.21	Rejected



3	I am prone to engaging in substance abuse as a form of social vice	Male	4.23	0.89	Accepted
		Female	2.51	1.29	
4	I am likely to engage in cyberbullying as a social vice	Male	4.56	1.42	Accepted
		Female	4.98	0.91	
5	I am inclined to participate in physical bullying behaviours.	Male	3.22	1.14	Accepted
		Female	2.51	1.29	Rejected
6	I am prone to engaging in skipping classes or truancy.	Male	4.44	0.65	Accepted
		Female	2.37	1.57	Rejected
7	I am likely to engage in criminal activities as social vices.	Male	3.19	0.97	Accepted
		Female	2.61	1.01	
8	I am likely inclined to engage in prostitution and indecent dressing	Male	2.01	1.89	Accepted
		Female	4.08	1.21	
9	I am likely to exhibit aggressive behaviours (such as fighting or physical altercations) as social vices	Male	4.11	1.07	Accepted
		Female	2.41	1.13	
10	I am more inclined to engage in relational aggression as social vices	Male	2.71	1.92	Accepted
		Female	3.57	1.01	
<b>Average Mean</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.86</b>	
		<b>Female</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>1.27</b>	

Based on the results presented in Table 3, it can be observed that there are gender-specific patterns and differences in the types of social vices engaged in by students. Let us analyze the mean values for each type of social vice based on gender:

Item 1, (violent social vices). The mean for males is 4.72 with a standard deviation of 0.54, while for females, it is 2.68 with a standard deviation of 1.12. This indicated that males tended to engage more in violent social vices compared to females. Item 2(Gossiping and spreading rumors), males had a mean of 2.71 with a standard deviation of 1.32, while females had a mean of 4.61 with a standard deviation of 0.21. This showed a clear difference with females being more likely to participate in this type of social vice.

Item 3 (Substance abuse), males had a mean of 4.23 with a standard deviation of 0.89, and females had a mean of 2.51 with a standard deviation of 1.29, suggesting that males were more prone to engaging in substance abuse. Item 4 (Cyberbullying), males had a mean of 4.56 with a standard deviation of 1.42, while females had a mean of 4.98 with a standard deviation of 0.91. Both genders showed a high inclination

towards engaging in cyber bullying.

Item 5 (Physical bullying behaviours), males had a mean of 3.22 with a standard deviation of 1.14, and females had a mean of 2.51 with a standard deviation of 1.29. This indicated that males were more likely to participate in physical bullying behaviours. Item 6 (Skipping classes or truancy), males had a mean of 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.65, while females had a mean of 2.37 with a standard deviation of 1.57. This suggested that males were more prone to engaging in truancy.

Item 7 (Criminal activities) males had a mean of 3.19 with a standard deviation of 0.97, and females had a mean of 2.61 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This indicated a slightly higher tendency for males to engage in criminal activities. Item 8. (Prostitution and indecent dressing), males had a mean of 2.01 with a standard deviation of 1.89, while females had a mean of 4.08 with a standard deviation of 1.21. This showed a significant difference, with females being more likely to engage in this behaviours.

Item 9 (Aggressive behaviours), males had a mean of 4.11 with a standard deviation of 1.07, and females had a mean of 2.41 with a standard deviation of 1.13. This indicated that males exhibited more aggressive behaviours compared to females. Item 10 (Relational aggression), males had a mean of 2.71 with a standard deviation of 1.92, while females had a mean of 3.57 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This suggested that females were more inclined to engage in relational aggression.

Overall, the average mean scores for males and females were 4.00 and 3.23 respectively, indicating that on average, males tended to engage in social vices more frequently than females. However, there were specific differences in certain types of social vices between genders, such as gossiping, physical bullying, truancy, and prostitution, where one gender may exhibit a higher tendency compared to the other.

### Research Question 3

What factors contribute to the observed gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices?

#### 2. Null Hypothesis (Ho):

There are no significant differences in how male and female students engage with social vices.

Table 5: Comparing mean and standard deviation, t-value and p-value results of factors contributing to the observed gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices.

S/N	Contributing Factors of Social Vices	Gender	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
1	Peer pressure plays a crucial role in influencing gender-based differences in social vices among secondary school students.	Male	4.11	0.37	0.7564	0.4500
		Female	4.07	0.43		
2	Lack of parental guidance is a key factor contributing to social vices among secondary school students.	Male	3.80	0.44	0.3517	0.7253
		Female	3.82	0.52		
3	Exposure to media and role models may shape the attitudes and behaviors of secondary school students towards social vices.	Male	3.75	0.51	0.7248	0.4692
		Female	3.71	0.42		

4	The influence of cultural norms and values on gender roles plays a role in shaping students' engagement with social vices.	Male	4.01	0.44	0.5675	0.4708
		Female	3.98	0.46		
5	Society's response and consequences for participating in social vices influence behaviour	Male	3.27	0.45	3.8605	0.0001
		Female	3.43	0.43		
6	I think that access to education and information related to social vices affects how students of different genders perceive and engage with them	Male	2.43	1.51	0.3613	0.7182
		Female	2.37	1.43		
	<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>3.625</b>	<b>0.543</b>	<b>0.7404</b>	<b>0.4597</b>
		<b>Female</b>	<b>3.677</b>	<b>0.613</b>		

In comparing the mean and standard deviation of factors contributing to gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices, one can see some interesting insights. Result from table 5 shows that with an average mean of 3.61 for male respondents and 3.98 for female respondents, all the items were accepted by all the participants as factors contributing to the observed gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices except item 6 which had a mean value of 2.37 for male and 2.43 for female. This was below the cut-off mean of 2.50. Peer pressure seems to have a slightly higher impact on males (Mean: 4.07) compared to females (Mean: 4.11). The t-value is 0.7564, indicating no significant difference, with a p-value of 0.4500. The difference in means is minimal, indicating that both genders were influenced by peer pressure. Item 2, Lack of parental guidance showed similar levels of impact on both males and females, with slightly higher means for females (Mean: 3.82) compared to males (Mean: 3.80). The t-value is 0.3517, with a p-value of 0.7253, showing no significant difference..

Item 3, exposure to media and role models had a slightly higher impact on males (Mean: 3.75) compared to females (Mean: 3.71), but the difference was not significant. Item 4, the influence of cultural norms and values appeared to have a similar impact on both genders, with slightly higher means for females (Mean: 4.01) compared to males (Mean: 3.98). The t-value is 0.5675, and the p-value is 0.4708, showing no significant difference. Item 5, Society's response and consequences for participating in social vices showed a noticeable difference in impact between males (Mean: 3.27) and females (Mean: 4.43), indicating that societal factors may affect genders differently. The t-value is 21.6928, indicating a significant difference, with a p-value of 0.0001. Access to education and information related to social vices seemed to have a no impact on females (Mean: 2.43) and males (Mean: 2.37), because the means were below the cut-off mean of 2.50. Also, with wider standard deviations for both genders, suggesting varying perceptions and engagement levels. The t-value is 0.3613, and the p-value is 0.7182, indicating no significant difference.

Overall, while some factors show significant differences in how male and female students engaged with social vices, others do not display such distinctions. Peer pressure, lack of parental guidance, exposure to media, and cultural norms do not seem to significantly vary between genders, while societal responses and consequences, as well as access to education and information, showed notable differences.

*The reasons why males and female students in the secondary schools may engage in different types of social vices.*

This study used interviews to explore the reasons for the gender difference in social vices engagement. The

interviews were finding out why males were likely to engage in social vices differently from females.

Student A, (Male Age 18) said:

Well, I think one reason could be peer pressure. Boys sometimes feel the need to fit in with a particular group, leading them to engage in activities they may not necessarily agree with.

Student B(Male, Age 15) said:

I agree with that. I also think that a lack of positive role models or mentors could contribute to males turning to social vices as a way of seeking guidance or a sense of belonging.

Student C (Male, Age 17) said:

I think societal expectations of masculinity can also play a role. Some males feel pressured to conform to certain stereotypes of manhood, which could influence their choices and behaviours.

Student D (Male, Age 14) said:

Family dynamics and upbringing could be a contributing factor too. If a male grows up in an environment where social vices are normalized or not actively discouraged, he may be more inclined to engage in similar behaviors.

Student E (Male, Age 16) said:

Personal insecurities, lack of self-control and self-esteem issues could drive males to seek validation or acceptance through involvement in social vices, as a way of boosting their confidence or feeling in control.

Student F (Male, Age 17):

Peers or friends who engage in social vices can exert a significant influence on an individual's choices. Being part of a social circle where such activities are normalized can make it easier for males to join in.

Student G (Female, Age 16):

I believe that societal expectations and gender roles play a significant role in shaping the behaviours of females. Women are often expected to conform to certain standards of behaviours and appearance, which can lead to pressure and feelings of inadequacy. In seeking validation or coping with these pressures, some women may turn to social vices as a way to escape or rebel against societal norms.

Student H (Female, Age 18)

From my perspective, the lack of support and resources available to women in certain situations can push them towards engaging in social vices. Women may face unique challenges, such as limited access to education, employment opportunities, or healthcare, which can lead to feelings of desperation and hopelessness. In such circumstances, some women may resort to social vices as a means of survival or as a response to systemic injustices

Student I (Female, Age 14)

Media influence and societal glorification of certain behaviours associated with social vices could create a

sense of allure or desirability, influencing females to emulate what they see.

The narratives provided by the participants underscored the complex interplay of societal expectations, gender dynamics, and structural inequalities in shaping female engagement in social vices. The responses suggested that males were likely to engage in social vices because of peer pressure, lack of positive role models, societal expectations of masculinity and lack of parental care while females may be driven to participate in such behaviours as a response to external pressures, lack of support, and systemic injustices. Understanding these underlying factors is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support systems to address the diverse needs of women in vulnerable situations.

Ultimately, a combination of these factors, along with individual circumstances and personal choices, can shape why males may engage in different types of social vices from females but there is no social vices that is strictly prescribed for males or females, any sex can exhibit it. It is a complex interplay of internal and external influences that drive these behaviours.

## DISCUSSION

The results from Table 1, comparing gender differences on the perception of social vices in the school environment, highlighted several interesting findings. In the first two scenarios, where peer pressure and gender impact on the prevalence of social vices were analyzed, there appeared to be no statistically significant difference between male and female perceptions. This is in line with previous studies by Alarid et al. 2000 and Moffitt et al. 2001) which found that both genders are equally susceptible to peer pressure and societal influences when it comes to engaging in social vices.

In the third scenario, regarding the types of social vices individuals engage in, the results also showed no significant difference between males and females. This aligned with research conducted by Brown and Johnson (2017), who suggested that societal norms and peer influences play a more crucial role in determining the type of social vices an individual engages in, rather than their gender.

Interestingly, in the last two scenarios regarding the prevalence of social vices among peers and the need for education programs, there were no significant differences between male and female perceptions. This indicated a shared understanding of the societal issues surrounding social vices and the necessity for collective action.

Overall, the results of this study supported existing literature on gender differences and social vices, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions and educational programs that address societal influences rather than focusing solely on gender disparities. Further research could delve deeper into the specific societal factors that influence both male and female engagement in social vices and tailor interventions accordingly.

The findings presented in Table 3 comparing the mean, standard deviation, and t-test results of gender-specific patterns or differences in the types of social vices engaged in by students revealed interesting insights into how men and women perceive and participate in such behaviours.

Previous studies have also examined gender differences in engagement with social vices. For example, research finds that males are more likely to view themselves in stereotypically masculine terms, that females are more likely to view themselves in stereotypically feminine ones, and that these differences in self-perception partially account for gender differences in social vices (Jensen, 2003) found that men were more likely to engage in violent behaviours, including physical aggression and criminal activities, relative to women. This aligned with the current study's finding that men were more likely to participate in violent



social vices compared to women.

Similarly, studies by (Coleman, Goldman, & Kugler, 2009) have demonstrated that women tended to engage more in relationally aggressive behaviours, such as gossiping and spreading rumors, compared to men. This is consistent with the current study's results indicating that women were more prone to participating in gossiping and spreading rumors as social vices than men.

The results for other types of social vices, such as substance abuse, cyberbullying, manipulative behaviors, and exclusionary practices, also reflected existing literature on gender differences in the manifestation of such behaviours.

Overall, the findings from this study reaffirm and extended the understanding of how gender influences perceptions and engagement with social vices. Future research could further explore the underlying reasons for these gender differences and examine the impact of societal norms and cultural factors on the prevalence of certain social vices among men and women

The results presented in Table 5 comparing the mean, standard deviation, t-value and p-value results of factors contributing to gender-based differences in students' engagement with social vices shed light on various influences that impact students' behaviours.

The results of this study aligned to previous studies that had examined similar factors. For example, research by Piquero, Gover, MacDonald, and Piquero, (2005) indicated that peer pressure plays a significant role in influencing adolescent behaviour, which aligned with the findings in this study on secondary school students. The results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female students regarding the impact of peer pressure on social vices engagement, implying that both genders may face similar pressures in this regard.

Moreover, studies by Booth, Farrell, and Varano, (2008) on theory suggested that gender differences in social vices reflected gender differences in parental discipline, such that girls were more consistently sanctioned for rule violations, thus leading them to develop higher levels of self-control than males. However, this current study reflects comparable findings, with no significant gender-based differences in the influence of parental guidance on social vices engagement. This suggested that parental guidance may be equally important for both male and female students in mitigating the risks of social vices.

Additionally, research by Akers (2009) emphasized the role of media and role models in shaping adolescents' perceptions and behaviours, the results in Table 5 indicated that exposure to media and role models may influence students' engagement with social vices, although not significantly differing between genders. This underscores the need for educators and parents to be aware of these influences and to provide students with positive role models and media literacy skills to navigate such influences effectively.

Overall, by referencing previous studies on similar factors influencing social vices engagement, the discussion can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the results presented in Table 5 and their implications for addressing gender-based differences in students' behaviours.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, several conclusions and recommendations were drawn regarding gender differences in perceptions and engagement with social vices among secondary school students.

It can be concluded that gender does not significantly impact the perception of social vices. The study findings suggested that both male and female students have similar perceptions regarding peer pressure, the

impact of gender on social vices, and the prevalence of social vices, indicating that societal influences played a more significant role in shaping behaviours than gender differences.

While some differences were observed in engagement with specific types of social vices, such as violence and relational aggression, overall, there was no significant gender disparity in the prevalence of social vices. This emphasized the need to consider individual factors and societal influences when addressing behavioural issues. The study's results indicated that various factors, including peer pressure, parental guidance, exposure to media, and role models, influenced students' engagement with social vices. Despite minor differences, these factors do not show significant gender-based distinctions, underscoring the importance of holistic interventions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Develop gender-neutral interventions:** Based on the study findings, it was recommended to implement interventions that address social vices without solely focusing on gender disparities. By considering societal influences and individual factors, tailored programs can better address the root causes of behavioural issues among students.
2. **Enhance media literacy and role model awareness:** Given the influence of media and role models on students' perceptions and behaviors, educators and parents should promote media literacy skills and provide positive role models to help students navigate societal influences effectively. This can help counteract negative portrayals of social vices in the media.
3. **Foster a supportive school environment:** Creating a school environment that promotes open communication, peer support, and positive relationships can help mitigate the risks of social vices among students. Schools should implement education programs that focus on building resilience, decision-making skills, and conflict resolution strategies to empower students to resist negative behaviours.
4. **School administrators and other educational stakeholders should organize seminars and workshops to train students on how to comport themselves within and outside the school settings.**
5. **Parents and the society as a whole should learn the proper way of nurturing and upbringing of their children and wards.**
6. **Further research on underlying factors:** Future studies should delve deeper into the underlying reasons for gender differences in engagement with social vices and explore how societal norms and cultural factors influence behavioral patterns. By understanding these factors more comprehensively, interventions can be tailored to address the specific needs of male and female students effectively.

Overall, by acknowledging the nuanced interplay of gender, societal influences, and individual factors in shaping behavior, schools and communities can implement targeted strategies to prevent and address social vices among students in a gender-sensitive and holistic manner.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research work was made possible with the support of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) Nigeria.

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