

Peer Pressure and Parental Upbringing as Correlates of Promiscuity among Teenage Students in Delta South Senatorial District

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship of peer pressure and parental upbringing with promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses and adopted a correlational research design. The population consisted of 32,865 students drawn from 159 public secondary schools in the district. From this population, 380 students were selected through a multistage sampling procedure based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample size guide. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire made up of three scales measuring peer pressure, parental upbringing, and promiscuity. Following expert validation and factor analysis, the Peer Pressure Scale contained 17 items, the Parental Upbringing Scale contained 18 items, while the Promiscuity Scale contained 15 items. The reliability of the scales was established using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded coefficients of 0.86, 0.85, and 0.91 respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and coefficient of determination were used to answer the research questions, while linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that peer pressure had a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with promiscuity and accounted for 42.8% of the variation in the behaviour. Parental upbringing also had a high positive and statistically significant relationship with promiscuity and accounted for 58.5% of the variation. The study therefore concluded that the sexual choices of teenagers are closely connected with both the influence of their peers and the quality of guidance, supervision, communication, and support they receive at home. The study highlights the need for parents, teachers, counsellors, and school authorities to work together in helping adolescents resist harmful peer influence and make safer and more responsible decisions about relationships and sexuality.

Keywords: Peer pressure, parental upbringing, promiscuity, adolescents, secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Promiscuity among teenagers is a sensitive but important concern because adolescence is a stage when young people are still developing their identity, judgment and ability to make independent decisions. In this study, promiscuity refers to involvement in casual or multiple sexual relationships and related sexual behaviours that may expose teenagers to emotional, social, educational and health consequences. Iwele et al. (2025), in a study involving secondary school students in Delta State, drew attention to changing sexual behaviours among adolescents and the need for more effective sexual guidance. Similarly, Oghounu (2025) found that sexual behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta State was connected with other behavioural and social influences. These findings suggest that teenage sexual behaviour should not be viewed only as an individual choice, because the people and conditions surrounding adolescents may also shape the decisions they make.

Peer pressure is one of the social influences that may affect teenagers' sexual decisions because adolescents often value acceptance and belonging within their friendship groups. Oghounu (2025) showed that peer pressure was an important behavioural influence among secondary school adolescents in Delta State. In the same direction, Baraki and Thupayagale-tshweneagae (2024) found that peer norms, pressure from friends and conversations within peer groups were among the relational factors shaping adolescents' sexual behaviour in Ethiopia. This implies that teenagers who spend time with peers who approve of risky or casual sexual

relationships may gradually see such behaviour as normal or acceptable. The desire to fit in may therefore make it difficult for some students to resist choices that conflict with their personal values or better judgment.

Parental upbringing may also influence how well teenagers manage peer pressure and make decisions about relationships and sexuality. The level of supervision, communication, discipline, emotional support and values provided at home can shape adolescents' behaviour. Ezebuchi and Chujor (2023) found that parenting styles were significantly related to at-risk sexual behaviour among adolescents in Rivers State. Likewise, Velazquez et al. (2023) reported that parental monitoring and family cultural values were associated with adolescents' sexual intentions and behaviour. Although these studies show that peers and parents matter, there is still a need to understand how peer pressure and parental upbringing relate specifically to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District. This study is therefore necessary because findings from other locations may not fully reflect the social and family experiences of teenagers in Delta South. The study may provide

Statement of the Problem

Promiscuity among teenage students remains a troubling issue because it can affect not only their health, but also their emotional wellbeing, school participation and future prospects. Teenagers may become involved in risky or multiple sexual relationships for different reasons, but two influences that appear especially important are peer pressure and the kind of upbringing they receive at home. Some adolescents may give in to friends in order to feel accepted, while others may lack the guidance, supervision or open communication needed to make careful decisions about relationships and sexuality. In Delta South Senatorial District, these concerns deserve attention because teenagers are growing up in a social environment where peer influence, changing values and varying parenting practices may shape their behaviour in different ways. Yet, there is still limited local evidence showing how peer pressure and parental upbringing relate to promiscuity among teenage students in the area. This study is therefore necessary to provide evidence that can guide parents, counsellors, teachers and school authorities in developing more practical ways of supporting teenagers and reducing risky sexual behaviour.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?
2. What is the relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.
2. There is no significant relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Promiscuity

Promiscuity in this study is viewed as a pattern of sexual involvement in which a teenager engages in casual, repeated, or multiple sexual relationships, especially where such involvement occurs without stable commitment. It is important to distinguish this from sexual activity generally, because being sexually active

does not automatically mean that a teenager is promiscuous. What matters more in this study is the pattern of behaviour, particularly the number of partners, frequency of partner changes, and the casual nature of the relationships involved. Iwele et al. (2025) noted that sexual behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State is changing and now includes patterns such as premarital sexual activity, multiple partnerships, and other emerging sexual practices. In a related Delta State study, Oghounu (2025) showed that adolescent sexual behaviour exists within a broader social context where peer and other behavioural influences may also play a role. Promiscuity is therefore treated here as a behavioural pattern rather than as a label used to judge the character of a teenager.

The concept can also be understood through several related dimensions. One of the most important is multiple sexual partnership, which involves having more than one sexual partner within a particular period or across a relatively short span of time. Other related dimensions include early sexual initiation, frequent change of partners, casual sexual encounters, inconsistent use of protection, and transactional sexual activity. Pathmendra et al. (2023), in a systematic review of adolescent sexual behaviour, identified early sexual debut, multiple sexual partners, condomless sex, paid sex, teenage pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections as common indicators of risky adolescent sexual behaviour. Similarly, Ipinimo et al. (2025) reported that 22.1% of the public secondary school adolescents studied in Ekiti State had experienced sexual intercourse, and 41.7% of those who were sexually active had initiated sex before the age of 15. These findings show that adolescent sexual behaviour can take different forms and should be understood through the timing, frequency, number of partners, and circumstances surrounding the behaviour.

The magnitude of these behaviours makes promiscuity an important variable to examine among teenage students. Gregory et al. (2024) found that 21.1% of secondary school adolescents studied in Yenagoa engaged in risky sexual behaviour, while 23.7% of those who were sexually experienced reported multiple sexual partners. In another Nigerian study, Ipinimo et al. (2025) reported that a notable proportion of sexually active adolescents began sexual activity at an early age, showing that sexual risk can start while students are still within the secondary school system. The pattern becomes more concerning when multiple partnerships, inconsistent protection, and transactional relationships occur together. In this study, promiscuity therefore refers mainly to the tendency of teenage students to engage in multiple, casual, or frequently changing sexual relationships. The variable is examined as an observable behavioural pattern that may be connected with peer pressure and the nature of parental upbringing.

Concept of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure refers to the influence that friends and other people within the same age group can have on a teenager's attitudes, choices, and behaviour. During adolescence, the need to feel accepted and included can make young people more willing to adjust their behaviour to fit the expectations of their friends. This influence may be direct, such as when peers openly encourage a teenager to engage in a particular behaviour, or indirect, when the teenager copies what appears common or acceptable within the group. Oghounu (2025), in a study involving secondary school adolescents in Delta State, showed that peer pressure forms part of the wider behavioural experiences that shape young people during adolescence. Similarly, Akude et al. (2024) found that peer sexual norms, attitudes, and pressure were significantly related to risky sexual behaviours among secondary school adolescents in Anambra State. This suggests that what teenagers believe their friends approve of can gradually influence the choices they make, especially when they strongly desire acceptance or fear being left out.

Peer pressure can be seen through behaviours such as conformity, desire for peer approval, imitation, direct persuasion, and acceptance of perceived group norms. A teenager may, for instance, become involved in a sexual relationship because friends present such behaviour as normal, mature, or necessary for social acceptance. Gregory et al. (2024) found that peer pressure strongly predicted risky sexual behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Yenagoa, showing how powerful peer influence can become in adolescent decision-making. From an international perspective, Baraki and Thupayagale-tshweneagae (2024) also identified peer influence, peer norms, and pressure to engage in sexual activity as important relational factors shaping adolescent sexual behaviour in Ethiopia. In this study, peer pressure therefore refers to the extent to

which teenage students feel influenced, encouraged, or pushed by friends to adopt attitudes and behaviours that may increase their involvement in casual or multiple sexual relationships.

Concept of Parental Upbringing

Parental upbringing refers to the way parents raise, guide, supervise, discipline, and support their children as they grow. It includes the values taught at home, the rules parents set, the level of emotional support they provide, and the way they communicate with their children about important life issues. During adolescence, these experiences can become especially important because teenagers are beginning to make more independent decisions while still needing direction from home. Ezebuchi and Chujor (2023) found that parenting styles were significantly related to at-risk sexual behaviour among adolescents in Rivers State, although the strength of the relationship differed across parenting styles. In a related study, Wilcox and Chujor (2023) reported that parenting styles and parental emotional support predicted the moral behaviour of secondary school adolescents. These findings suggest that parental upbringing goes beyond punishment or control; it also involves the quality of guidance, closeness, communication, and support teenagers receive within the family.

Parental upbringing can be understood through dimensions such as parental monitoring, communication, discipline, emotional support, and the values communicated within the home. Monitoring involves parents being reasonably aware of where their teenagers are, who they spend time with, and the activities they engage in, while communication involves creating room for honest conversations about relationships, sexuality, and responsible choices. Velazquez et al. (2024) found that family cultural values and parental monitoring were associated with adolescents' sexual responsibility, intentions, and behaviour among Mexican adolescents. However, Ayu et al. (2023), in a meta-analysis of 17 studies, found that the overall effects of parental monitoring and communication on risky sexual behaviour were not statistically significant. This contrast suggests that parental influence may not work in exactly the same way across all families and settings. In this study, parental upbringing therefore refers to the pattern of guidance, supervision, discipline, communication, emotional support, and values provided by parents that may shape teenagers' vulnerability to casual or multiple sexual relationships.

Empirical Reviews

Peer Pressure and Promiscuity

Oghounu (2025) examined the relationship among sexual behaviour, peer pressure, and drug use behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta State. The study adopted a correlational survey design and involved 150 students selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques from a population of about 50,000 secondary school students. Data were collected using the Sex Behaviour, Peer Pressure and Drug Use Behaviour Questionnaire (SBPPDUBQ). The findings showed that peer pressure was significantly related to the sexual behaviour of adolescents, suggesting that the influence of friends can shape the choices teenagers make about sexual involvement. The study is closely related to the present research because it was conducted in Delta State and focused directly on peer pressure and adolescent sexual behaviour. However, the present study extends this concern by examining peer pressure specifically in relation to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Akude et al. (2024) investigated peer sexual norms, attitudes, and pressure as correlates of risky sexual behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study focused on how adolescents' perceptions of their friends' sexual behaviour, attitudes toward sex, and pressure to engage in sexual activity were related to risky sexual practices. Using a correlational approach, the researchers found significant relationships among peer sexual norms, sexual attitudes, pressure to have sex, and risky sexual behaviour. Their findings suggest that teenagers may be more likely to engage in risky sexual practices when such behaviour is accepted, encouraged, or seen as normal within their peer groups. The study is relevant to the present research because it demonstrates that peer influence goes beyond direct persuasion and may also operate through shared beliefs, expectations, and the desire to fit in. The present study differs by focusing on promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Gregory et al. (2024) examined the prevalence and pattern of risky sexual behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The cross-sectional analytical study involved 750 students selected through multistage sampling, of whom 739 provided usable responses. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire and analysed using Chi-square and binary logistic regression. The findings revealed that 21.1% of the respondents engaged in risky sexual behaviour, while 23.7% of sexually experienced adolescents reported having multiple sexual partners. More importantly, peer pressure significantly predicted risky sexual behaviour, with adolescents exposed to peer pressure showing a much greater likelihood of engaging in such practices. The study is particularly relevant because Bayelsa State is within the Niger Delta region and shares some social characteristics with Delta State. It further supports the need to examine how peer pressure may relate to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Parental Upbringing and Promiscuity

Ezebuchi and Chujor (2023) examined the relationship between parenting styles and at-risk sexual behaviour among adolescents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted a correlational design and involved 350 Senior Secondary One students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected with the Parenting Style Questionnaire and the Adolescents' At-Risk Sexual Behaviour Inventory, while simple linear regression was used for analysis. The findings showed that parenting styles, when considered together, had a significant relationship with adolescents' at-risk sexual behaviour. Authoritarian parenting was significantly related to risky sexual behaviour, whereas authoritative parenting was not. This study is relevant to the present research because it shows that the way parents guide and discipline their children can be connected with adolescents' sexual choices. The present study, however, looks at parental upbringing more broadly by considering supervision, communication, emotional support, discipline, and family values in relation to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Aliyu and Aransiola (2023) investigated parent-adolescent communication about sexual and reproductive health issues in selected urban slums in Ibadan, Oyo State. The researchers used a mixed sequential explanatory design and collected quantitative data from 796 parent-adolescent pairs, together with information from focus group discussions. Their findings showed that communication about sexual and reproductive health occurred in many homes, but it was often indirect and limited. Mothers discussed these issues more frequently than fathers, while some sensitive topics, including the consequences of sexual behaviour, were rarely discussed. The study is relevant because communication is a major part of parental upbringing. When teenagers are not given clear and open guidance at home, they may turn to friends or other sources for information about relationships and sexuality. The present study extends this concern by examining whether the wider pattern of parental upbringing is related to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South.

Millanzi et al. (2023) examined parent-adolescent communication about sexual and reproductive health among secondary school adolescents in Tanzania. The study used baseline cross-sectional data from a randomized controlled trial and involved 647 randomly selected adolescents in ordinary-level secondary schools. The findings revealed that 73.3% of the adolescents had never discussed sexual and reproductive health matters with their parents, indicating a considerable communication gap within families. The researchers therefore emphasized the need for stronger parent-adolescent communication and collaborative interventions. This study is important to the present research because it shows that parental upbringing involves more than setting rules or monitoring behaviour; it also includes giving teenagers the opportunity to discuss sensitive issues openly and receive reliable guidance. The present study therefore seeks to determine whether such patterns of parental upbringing are related to promiscuity among teenage students in Delta South Senatorial District.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationships among peer pressure, parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District. The population comprised 32,865 students from 159 public secondary schools. A sample of 380 students was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size guide and selected through a multistage sampling

procedure involving simple random, stratified, and proportionate sampling techniques. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising the Peer Pressure Scale, Parental Upbringing Scale, and Promiscuity Scale, rated on a four-point rating scale. The instrument was validated by experts and further subjected to factor analysis, resulting in 17 peer pressure items, 18 parental upbringing items, and 15 promiscuity items. The content validity was 0.85% for the peer pressure scale, 73% for the parental upbringing scale and 0.78% for the promiscuity scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.86, 0.85, and 0.91 respectively established the reliability of the scales. Three trained research assistants supported the administration and retrieval of the questionnaire after permission was obtained from the sampled school authorities, selected students were informed of the purpose of the research and ensured confidentiality of their responses and strict anonymity was observed. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and coefficient of determination were used to answer the research questions, while linear regression tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation and coefficient of determination of the relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State

Variable	N	R	r^2	$r^2\%$	Decision
Peer Pressure	380	0.654	0.428	42.8	Positive Relationship
Promiscuity					

Table 1 shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.65$) indicates a moderate degree of relationship, suggesting that as peer pressure increases, promiscuity among students also tends to increase. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.43$) reveals that approximately 42.8% amount to the contribution of peer pressure on promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State. Based on this result, the decision indicates a positive relationship.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation and coefficient of determination of the relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State

Variable	n	r	r^2	$r^2\%$	Decision
Parental Upbringing	380	0.765	0.585	58.5	High Positive Relationship
Promiscuity					

Table 2 shows that there is a high positive relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.765$) indicates a high degree of relationship, suggesting that as parental upbringing increases, promiscuity among students also tends to increase. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.585$) reveals that approximately 58.5% amount to the contribution of parental upbringing to promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State. Based on this result, the decision indicates a high positive relationship.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Table 3: Linear regression analysis on peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.130	1	0.130	282.51	0.000
Residual	7006.175	378	18.535		
Total	7006.305	379			

$\alpha = 0.05$ $r = 0.654$, $r\text{-square} = 0.428$

a. Dependent Variable: Promiscuity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Pressure

Table 3, shows the F-value of 282.51 and a p-value of 0.000. Testing the null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 was less than alpha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This revealed that there was a significant relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Table 4: Linear regression analysis on parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.934	1	4.934	533.34	0.002
Residual	7001.372	378	18.522		
Total	7006.305	379			

$\alpha = 0.05$ $r = 0.765$, $r\text{-square} = 0.585$

a. Dependent Variable: Promiscuity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Parental Upbringing

Table 4, shows the F-value of 533.34 and a p-value of 0.002. Testing the null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.002 was less than alpha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This revealed that there was a significant relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Peer Pressure and Promiscuity among Secondary School Students

The findings from research question 1 and hypothesis 1 showed that peer pressure had a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District. This suggests that teenagers who feel a stronger need to fit in with their friends, gain approval, or follow the sexual behaviour accepted within their peer group may be more likely to engage in casual or multiple sexual relationships. The finding agrees with Akude et al. (2024), who reported that peer sexual norms and pressure to engage in sexual activity were significantly related to risky sexual behaviour among adolescents in Anambra State. It also supports Gregory et al. (2024), who found that peer pressure significantly predicted risky sexual behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Yenagoa. However, the finding differs from Fred et al. (2024), who found that direct and indirect peer pressure were not significantly associated with sexual risk-taking among adolescent girls in southwestern Uganda. This contrast suggests that

peer influence may vary depending on the social setting, gender, family background, and other experiences surrounding the adolescent.

Parental Upbringing and Promiscuity among Secondary School Students

The findings from research question 2 and hypothesis 2 showed that parental upbringing had a high positive and statistically significant relationship with promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District. This suggests that the kind of supervision, discipline, communication, emotional support, and guidance teenagers receive at home is closely connected with the sexual choices they make. The finding agrees with Ezebuchi and Chujor (2023), who found that parenting styles were significantly related to at-risk sexual behaviour among adolescents in Rivers State. It also supports Velazquez et al. (2024), who reported that parental monitoring and family cultural values were associated with adolescents' sexual intentions and behaviour. However, the finding differs from Ayu et al. (2023), whose meta-analysis showed that parental monitoring and parent-adolescent communication did not have statistically significant overall effects on risky sexual behaviour. This difference suggests that parental upbringing may not influence every teenager in the same way, as its effect may depend on the quality of family relationships, cultural expectations, communication patterns, and the wider social environment surrounding the adolescent.

FINDINGS

The summary of the findings is presented below:

1. There is a significant relationship between peer pressure and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.
2. There is a significant relationship between parental upbringing and promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that peer pressure and parental upbringing are important factors associated with promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District. The findings showed that peer pressure had a moderate positive and significant relationship with promiscuity, while parental upbringing had a high positive and significant relationship with the behaviour. These results show that teenagers' sexual decisions are not shaped by personal choice alone, but are also connected with the influence of friends and the kind of guidance, supervision, communication, and support they receive at home. The relevance of this study lies in showing that efforts to address promiscuity among teenagers should not focus only on the students themselves. Parents, teachers, counsellors, and school authorities also have important roles to play. By strengthening parental guidance, promoting open communication, and helping students build confidence to resist negative peer influence, schools and families can better support teenagers in making safer and more responsible decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents and teachers should help students develop the confidence and self-control needed to resist negative peer pressure, especially when friends encourage risky sexual behaviour.
2. Parents should provide consistent supervision, emotional support, open communication, and appropriate discipline to guide adolescents toward responsible sexual decisions.

Contributions to Knowledge

The study has contributed to knowledge in the following areas:

1. The study reaffirmed that peer pressure has a relationship with promiscuity among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.
2. The study demonstrated that parental upbringing has an association with promiscuous behaviour among secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District.

Limitation of the Study

The study was limited to students in public secondary schools in Delta South Senatorial District, so the findings may not fully reflect students in other areas or private schools. Since the study dealt with sensitive sexual behaviour, some students may not have been completely open in their responses. Also, the correlational design only showed relationships among the variables and could not prove cause and effect. Even with these limitations, the study still provides useful insight into how peer pressure and parental upbringing are related to teenage promiscuity.

Ethical Consideration

Letter of introduction was submitted to the principals of the selected schools after the purpose of the research was discussed with the managements. The students were informed immediately and allowed to participate voluntarily without filling their names on the questionnaire to ensure anonymity and privacy of participants. Students were assured that their responses were purely for research purpose.

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