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Exploring the Underpinnings of Pseudo-prostitution in Institutions of Higher Learning in Selected African Countries: A Literature Review

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KEYWORDS Poverty. Matrifocality. Sexually Transmitted Diseases. University Students. Peer Pressure. Media. Cultural Erosion. Eurocentrism

ABSTRACT Indubitably and regrettably, pseudo prostitution is a cankerworm that needs to be fought right, left and down the middle in institutions of Higher learning of especially developing countries. This is believed to be a result of poverty and its concomitant ramifications. Through the use of a review of literature methodology, the aim of the paper is to explore factors surrounding pseudo prostitutions in institutions of Higher learning in some developing countries. The following factors were found to underpin the phenomenon: poverty and lack of a viable financial support system; sexual permissiveness; cultural fusion; and peer media pressure and sexuality. The following perfidious and ramifying factors have been associated with the phenomenon. Prevalence of STDS; the dangers of backstreet abortion; loss of academic focus; and passion related crimes. The paper recommends: sufficient financial assistance and income plan of students especially the girl children by relevant stakeholders; moral restoration through the facilitation of FBO in institutions of Higher learning; desensitizing the sex subject; improved edutainment campaigns on STD and drug and alcohol abuse; tightening the residence access control; proving sufficient entertainment activities. The Moral Development Theory has been found befitting in analysing the birth and perpetuation of pseudo-prostitution in tertiary institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps it is good to draw a distinction between conventional prostitution and pseudo prostitution although in these researchers' contention' pseudo prostitution lies in the continuum of prostitution (Nyathi-Mokoena and Choma 2013). While factors underpinning both may interplay, the circumstances may hugely differ in many fronts. For example, clandestine transactional sexual engagement on a small scale by some students in the institutions of higher learning to secure or top up their financial needs may fall under the category of pseudo prostitution (Luiz and Roets 2000). Perhaps this can be compared with what is being referred to as white-collar prostitution done by working class women. This could be taking place in the woman's place of abode, both discreetly and clandestinely. Therefore, pseudo-prostitution may be happening when the student is not busy with her assignments. She may not do it when temporal circumstances may not allow, or when she may accidentally have enough resources to meet her basics. It is circumstantial prostitution and may not display an array of characteristics posed by the professional or occupational prostitutes. However, from largely African lenses, it is still culturally embarrassing, ethically and immoral (Kang'ethe and Gaseitsiwe 2012).

Indubitably, and viewing pseudo prostitution contextually, African thinking may not come into grips with this kind of prostitution. It is a behaviour that is shameful and almost a taboo. It is degrading, ethically and morally wrong (Kang'ethe and Gaseitsiwe 2012). Students practising the phenomenon are viewed as those who have lost social and cultural direction. This is because the act, with its evil impacts may spell doom to the quality of citizenship these students may espouse in their near future. This may also mean how their respective countries may be denied of a strongly desirable moral community (Byamugisha et al. 2002).

To corroborate the definition of pseudo prostitution espoused above, 'pseudo' entails that something is bogus, not complete, not real, assumed and deceptive (Misi 2008). Therefore, pseudo-prostitution means that an individual half way undertakes some characteristics of a prostitute, though still not overtly. The behaviour, therefore, is still clandestine and not taking the route of daily search for clients to satisfy or fulfil their financial gratification. Simply put, the students engaging in pseudo prostitution engage in transactional sexual enterprises on a relatively smaller scale, and without openly letting

every "Dick and Harry" to know their services. It is prostitution in which the players participate in a disguised way, perhaps discriminating between clients in an endeavour to avoid being publicly known by every "Dick" and "Harry" that they are out there to solicit financial gains through transactional exchange, but are still students whose lone goal is purely educational. Further elaborated, pseudo-prostitution in institutions of higher learning is a form of prostitution which is still latent, or not overt, but whose pivotal goal is financial gain by some students to fend for themselves while still studying. It is also interesting to also note that this pseudo prostitution seems to be gendered as it is mainly associated with the female folks, even though male counterparts also engage in male prostitution (Hedin and Mansson 2003).

Problem Statement

Apparently, poverty and its concomitant ramifications continue to overwhelm learners in many institutions of learning in some African countries with the result that some students have to result to various illicit behaviours such as pseudo-prostitution to mitigate their economic malaise and therefore sustain themselves. This has had an array of perfidious and ramifying effects such as failure to adequately steer to their academic goals, prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and the dangers of backstreet abortion. This is pathetic as the students are expected by their families and communities they hail from to be role models for the upcoming generation, and also to be good citizens for their countries. This justifies the need to deeply explore the environment surrounding pseudo-prostitution taking selected countries as a platform. The study would perhaps reveal an inventory of factors that can be useful in informing guidelines in institutions of higher learning to address the economic and social challenges faced by the students that possibly lead them to resort to illicit behaviours such as pseudo-prostitution.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper has used desk research which involves the collection and synthesis of existing research. Gaps were identified and conclusions were made through a review of available publications. In order to add value to the available block of knowledge, one of the researchers has incorporated her experiential observations as a student currently enrolled with one of the universities in the third world countries.

Theoretical Framework

Moral Development Theory

Lawrence Kohlberg, the brains behind the Moral theory argues that human beings' moral ethics develop as they grow and through the processes of socialization and social interaction (Barger 2000). This puts emphasis on the impact of mores and laws in moulding one's moral behaviour and moral judgement. According to Lawrence Kohlberg, there are six stages that ought to be systematically followed if moral maturity is to be achieved (Lapsey and Narvaez 2004). These stages are broken down and subdivided into pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional stages (Barger 2000). Lawrence Kohlberg also argues that biological maturity should be corroborated with cognitive and moral maturity. This then entails that egoistic behaviour and immoral behaviour should wade off as people strive for conventional maturity. At this stage, there is conformity with the social and legal laws. It is true that in Africa, prostitution is not celebrated even though it might not be criminally wrong. Humans have an obligation to act morally for their sake and for the sake of others. This is perhaps why prostitution in Zimbabwe is listed under crimes on Sexual Crimes and Crimes against Morality (News Day 2013). Taking this stand into consideration, Africans deserve to be famed for distinguishable dignity which is mainly rooted in principled moral behaviour.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Factors Underpinning Pseudo-prostitution in Institutions of Higher Learning

Poverty and Lack of a Viable Financial Support

In the 21st century, and perhaps due to the raging wind of globalization (Kang'ethe 2014a), many developing countries are increasingly making huge efforts to ensure that every "Dick and Harry" access education. Usually in tandem with the health budget, education budgets in many developing countries constitutes the lion's share of their national budgets (UNDP

2004). This is a succinct indicator that these countries are treading well in the path to achieving the Millennium Development Goal number two that envisages universal education to all the citizens in the country (UNDP 2004). To this end, many African governments and organizations have been offering bursaries and sponsoring the children of the less privileged families to local and international Universities. Although a noble thing to do, some of these bursaries have either been insufficient or dependent on a student having to pass well in the modules one is pursuing. In the eventuality that one does not do well, coupled by its insufficiency, a student may be forced to operate on a shoe lace budget, or alternatively look for alternative means of financing an array of basic items such as the books and other life needs. This may be the genesis of indulging in illicit behaviours that can increase one's financial position to float and be on equal footing with the other student colleagues who may be well financed (News Day 2011). For example, the Zimbabwe Presidential Scholarship withdraws its support if the recipients mainly sponsored to study in South African Universities fail to score a fifty percent pass. Although this condition is a motivation to hard work, making students to commit to burn their midnight oil all the days of the week, some students, especially the lazy ones and average ones sometimes fail to make a fifty percent score in all their modules. In such an eventuality, a student will either choose to go back to Zimbabwe as a nationally embarrassing university drop-out; or strategize, through hook or crook to finish the degree. Perhaps it is good to indicate that many of these bursary beneficiaries come from extremely impoverished backgrounds such that expecting family assistance will be both a fantasy and a utopian phenomenon. Also, going back without the degree would automatically mean entrapment in the poverty snare. What a dilemma, a sink or float situation which needs bold and courageous decisions….. In such a case, many find themselves engaging in pseudo-prostitution just to survive (Ebong 1994). On the other hand, some bursaries offered by companies and organizations are insufficient or inconsistent, covering only the tuition and maybe accommodation. The need to grab the available opportunity causes these students to accept such bursaries even though they might not knowing how they will feed. The survey conducted by Okafor and Duru (2010) at Imo University in Nigeria depicts that 21 percent of the students engage in prostitution for survival. Indeed, desperate times calls for desperate decision. It is often said that prostitution is the most easily accessible industry because it does not requires a CV, past experience, or a list of referees. This is why many young women are easily recruited. Best still, the salary is prompt and does not have to come after a laborious lengthy month.

Sexual Permissiveness

The home, the church and the primary education systems often act as the most prevalent forms of socialization (Uzokwe 2008). They assist in moulding behaviour and distinguishing between right and wrong. Therefore, they usually impart a sense of morality through instilling behaviour that is acceptable in the society. The university environment, however, is a setting where guidance is minimal such that even the saints can be clothed with the Jezebel spirit of promiscuity (News Day 2011). More so, parental control ceases to exist as most students will be residing at the university premises. Some students may want to maximize their newly found liberty from the clutches of their parents (Uzokwe 2008). In fact, Okafor and Duru (2010) discovered that thirty one percent of pseudo-prostitution is caused by a lack of parental guide. Where there is no control, there is no prediction of the kind of behaviour one may choose to adopt. Even though pastors and lecturers may aid in giving control, the relations are usually impersonal such that even little effect is not guaranteed. With eurocentric behaviour slowly but surely diluting the afrocentric way of life in many African countries, moral decadence is increasingly rearing its ugly head (Kang'ethe and Mafa 2014). In terms of behavioural dispensation, there is now little or no difference at all between folks that are of the African origin and of the West. From dressing to speech to behaviour, indeed the moral fibre of an African woman is weakening (Kang'ethe 2014b). Increased sexual activities and the acceptance of behaviour once utterly condemned are among the manifestations of moral decay. It is both strange and ironic the way pseudo-prostitution among university female students has gained so much popularity that unconsciously, people are beginning to normalize it.

Cultural Fusion

Africa is known for its indubitably, diversity and assortment of its cultural composition (Afolayan 2004). For example Malawian and Nigerians are more reserved in their associations and more so in matters of sexuality. Also, clubbing, drinking and smoking especially for women are viewed as an abomination to the society (MacArthur 2005). On the other hand, the Southern Africa countries such as South Africa are more liberal on issues of sexuality, dating and ways of dressing. Even though individual physical boundaries are still maintained, Africa has recently become an educational village as students are crossing political boundaries to attain and further their educational prospects. South Africa, especially the University of Fort Hare holds quite a number of foreign students mainly from Zimbabwe and other African states (News Day 2011). It should then be noted that as people migrate, they bring along their culture that has been embedded in them through socialization at various agents (Afolayan 2004). This is creating some sort of homogenous behaviour across Africa. Hence, the excitement of being in a new place with a new and seemingly vibrant environment may lure some people to experiment in pseudo-prostitution, either for fun or for transactional benefits. Some of the contributory factors may involve students who may experiment in smoking, drug use and alcohol intake. These psychotropic drugs influence their behaviour by making them tipsy that rails them out of control and find themselves in pseudo-prostitution (Misi 2008).

Peer and Media Pressure on Sexuality

Indeed, it is true that iron sharpens iron. However, it is equally true that bad company corrupts character (MacArthur 2005). It is therefore not surprising that a once well behaved student may lose his/her moral fibre upon following his/her peers or through the influence of media (Kang'ethe 2014c). This is largely because every environment is associated with a dominant behaviour that sweeps away everyone who does not have the tenacity to stand against all odds, and thus succumbing to peer-pressure (Olugbile et al. 2008). At university settings, there is no parental supervision to monitor the coming and going of children. Instead, parents are substituted by peers while the elders' relevance is hijacked by You Tube, Facebook and the world of internet. The media takes over to be the bench mark of behaviour for those who lose their originality (Kang'ethe and Mafa 2014). With most African young ladies attempting and wishing to live a Hollywood lifestyle, where fashion makes louder statements than a vocalist, and therefore succumbing to forces of Americanisation of the African Values and culture (Nicoladaides 2012), this prompts the ladies to look for any means of getting the money to afford them their desired lifestyle. Pseudo-prostitution, then, has become one of the avenues to achieve such desires and whims. Further, dreams of money is also prompted by the need to own the latest phones, clothing, shoes etc. As such, it is possible for some to resort to pseudo-prostitution with lecturers, married men and sugar daddies, those with a few notes to spare. Indubitably, therefore, failure to adapt to new settings and be content with one's lifestyle may be the genesis and reason for adopting this kind of behaviour.

The Perfidy and Ramifications Associated with Pseudo-prostitution among University Students

Prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

It is ironic that despite global, regional and nation-wide efforts of daily advocacy messages dissemination for safe sex practice in order to reduce or stop new STI infections as well as re-infections, the messages are never adequately received, conceptualized or internalized rendering increased prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS a thorn in the flesh (World Bank 2003). This is more profound among the youths, most of whom are still in tertiary institutions. This may be attributable to the fact that this age group is still biologically sexually active. Mathematicians plainly prove that frequency in sexual activities especially without protection increases the probability of one being infected by sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, HIV, herpes and other infections (Walker 2005).With regard to HIV/AIDS, MacPhail and Campbell (2001) revealed that 18.9 percent of the youths ranging from 17 to 20 years and 43.1 percent of the youths between 21 and 25 years are infected by the HIV virus – the age group for university students. Pseudo-prostitu-

tion on the other hand is a likely factor exacerbating the infection of this group of youth more so that this group may still be swimming under the sea of experimenting new things, different sexual partners being a common phenomenon. Because pseudo-prostitution involves an assumed identity, timid persons may consume alcohol or drugs in order to overcome timidity. Even though these substances may indeed instil a daring spirit, they tend to dampen or weaken a person's reasoning and the ability to negotiate for safe sex (Walker 2005). Such uncalculated behaviour leads to costly mistakes that may change one's life forever. Indeed, a few minutes of fun may turn into a life time of despair and misery. The hope and future of Africa – held by young adults, may be turned into an unpredictable nightmare if students are entrapped into a snare of pseudo-prostitution.

The Perfidious Effects of Backstreet Abortion

Many a times as human beings, we are not prepared for the consequences that come with our actions (Ortiz-Ortega 2003). This is also true when it comes to sexual activities. Only a few students are emotionally, financially and psychologically ready for parenthood even though many indulge in activities and behaviour that lead to parenthood. Also, many African societies such as those of Zimbabwe, Malawi, Nigeria and Kenya, have socio-cultural and religious costs attached to especially girl children becoming pregnant out of wedlock and entering into a state of single parenthood. The phenomenon is associated with shame, guilt, and loss of self-esteem (Kang'ethe and Khayundi 2014). In order to evade such costs whether in form of verbal abuse, banishment and condemnation, female students who find themselves in these predicaments may opt or resort to the state of procuring illicit or street abortions which poses serious health risks (Kang'ethe and Khayundi 2014). Pregnancy is a manifestation of deeds done behind closed doors and efforts may be made to conceal such behaviour. Streets abortion can be life-threatening, cancerous and may lead to infertility due to infections as they are carried out by para-professionals or totally by non-professionals. It is pertinent to also note that in many countries such as Kenya and Zimbabwe, abortion is a serious criminal offence which is punishable by law, hence taking the route of illegal latent abortions might be the only available option (Ortiz-Ortega 2003). Contrastingly, South Africa is more liberal as abortion is legal and can be carried out in public hospitals. Street abortion cases, therefore, may then be minimal. Also, having children out of wedlock is more acceptable in this nation than it is in other states (Ortiz-Ortega 2003). While the state of legalizing abortion may save many young people from dying as a result of indulging in illicit abortion, there are debates of the possible impact of moral decadence the phenomenon poses to the general society.

Loss of Academic Focus

While on one side of the spectrum, these researchers support the proverb that too many cooks spoil the broth, on the other side of the spectrum they support the fact that undertaking too many things at the same time may well lead to failure to successfully accomplish any of them (Simpson and Weiner 1989). Primarily, Universities serve as learning institutions and not as brothels or bars (Misi 2008). Students who multitask, mixing studies with drugs and prostitution may lose their academic focus, subsequently leading to failure (Okafor and Duru 2010).As time lost is never recouped, this is why it is crucial to prioritize the most important and the right things instead of majoring in the minor issues at the expense of the core business, which is obtaining education. Those who do not take caution to capitalize on fulfilling their academic goal usually fail their exams and end-up losing their bursaries and scholarships (News Day 2011). On the other hand, others become pregnant and drop-out to cater for the needs of their children (Kang'ethe and Khayundi 2014). These unpredictable circumstances ultimately ensnare students especially those who come from the less privileged backgrounds back into the merciless poverty circle (Okafor and Duru 2010). Possibly, being a drop-out may make it impossible for these students to exit pseudo-prostitution and perhaps make them graduate to conventional prostitution as a surviving strategy irrespective of whether prostitution is criminalised or not.

Passion Related Crimes

Pseudo-prostitution as an underground phenomenon is coupled with love webs and love

triangles (Uzokwe 2008). Since the ligament that holds and maintains it is financial gain, the clients ought to be financially stable and able to throw around money (Uzokwe 2008). Actually, Misi (2008) is of the view that politicians and government officials are the most frequent clients for university students. Just as what happens under the sun cannot be concealed forever, crimes of passions such as heated arguments, physical fights and destruction of property may result where underground relationships are discovered by other parties. Where security measures are minimal or unavailable, these violent impacts between lovers may escalate to be life threatening (Rodriguez et al. 2013). These are crimes that occur when actions are clouded by emotions and feelings of betrayal. Passion related crimes result when pangs of passion obsesses and overwhelms one's state of mind such that they tend to forget the consequences of their behaviour. With the countries of Botswana, South Africa and Namibia having higher rates of passion killing, the respective governments need to cautiously craft laws and possibly come with ways of counselling the loving parties to amicably manage passion related conflicts (Kang'ethe 2009).

CONCLUSION

Indubitably, pseudo prostitution in the institutions of higher learning in many developing countries is still a grey area which needs further research with the hope of coming with factors that needs to be worked on in order to annihilate it altogether. This is because of its perfidious and ramifying results to the lives of the students and their future. This paper is not aimed at judging students that find themselves in pseudo-prostitution, neither does it applauds them, but simply challenges the minds of all the stakeholders to assess the cost which is attached to such a behaviour. This then calls for governments, parents, university authorities and students themselves to jointly seek measures that can aid to contain this behaviour because pseudo-prostitution does more harm than good in the societies and lives of university students. Governments can then revisit their budgets and wisely prioritise their resources if the cultural identity of Africa is to be reclaimed and be reestablished. On the other hand, students need to learn to solve their problems through constructive initiations and not taking the easy way out, because sweet comes from sweat. More so, there is need for the students to be content with what they have. As the Holy bible asserts, the love of money is the root of all evil.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sufficient Financial Assistance and Income Plan by Relevant Stakeholders

Importantly, the government needs to widen the horizon of financial packages to help the students. This, it is believed, will reduce many from engaging in endeavours to raise money for their survival while on campus.

Moral Restoration through the Facilitation of Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)

Indubitably, the role of faith based organizations should be stressed in their education about immoral activities generally. Besides the on-campus faith based groupings, the university should hold faith based seminars steered by theological professionals who have mastered the subject of morality and immorality.

Desensitizing the Sex Subject

Africa, due to its values and norms generally forbids parents and children to openly discuss matters associated with sexuality. For some reason, conversations that centre on sex are viewed as morally unacceptable especially in families with strong cultural and traditional backgrounds. The intentions for such a way of life may well be justifiable in the eyes of the elders. However, the sacredness of sex is waning away as youths, especially those at universities are looking up to the electronic media as a source of information. Sadly, most of these information is marred with myths and false content. The accumulation of such mythical information stirs an eagerness for trying-out new things. If sex issues are desensitized, however, the youths will be mentally empowered to distinguish between facts and mere myths. This will hopefully give them an upper hand above unsubstantiated hearsays. Also, there will be room to openly ask clarification on vague sexual-oriented information from parents and elders without any awkward feeling.

Improved Edutainment Campaigns on STDs and Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Importantly, universities need to stage frequent seminars and campaigns pertaining to fighting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The assumption that people know about HIV/AIDS should be discouraged. This is because it is institutions of Higher Learning that are most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS especially in South Africa.

Tightening Residence Access Control

Theoretically, university residences are far away from homes. But the security of some residences in some universities is so scant allowing every "Dick and Harry" to easily gain access. This largely provides a fertile ground for malpractices such as prostitution in the residences. Importantly, the universities should be exposed to tight security such that leaving the university at will need to be discouraged, especially at night. This to some extent can possibly reduce the flow of people in and out of the university. It is especially critical that visitors are succinctly identified. For example, they should leave their identity documents with the security. This restricted movement in and out of the universities could possibly have an impact in student freedom that exposes them to various ill practices such as pseudo-prostitution.

Provision of Sufficient Entertainment Activities

Just like addiction, prostitution is a process which may start with a seed until it blooms and flourishes. In the same sense, lack of entertaining activities may push students into taverns, clubs and other entertainment activities as a reaction to overload stresses and distresses from school's workload. It is important for universities to frequently embrace edutainment activities such as bashes, staging extra- curricular activities etc.

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Paper received for publication on June 2015
Paper accepted for publication on July 2016