



## ABSTRACT

The study is focused on the effects of cohabitation on students' academic performance among Post-Secondary school students in Kaltungo, Gombe State, Nigeria. The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey design with a population of 5,000 students. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the required respondents for the study. A sample of 300 students was used from the

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## N INVESTIGATION ON THE EFFECTS OF COHABITATION AND STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG THE POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KALTUNGO, GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA

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## INTRODUCTION

**A**cademic is a vital societal process that helps learners to inculcate essential skills, abilities, and knowledge, and also leads to the overall growth and progress of individuals, the community, and the nation as a whole. An educated person is not only an accomplished scholar but also regarded as one who renders an efficient contribution towards



various institutions. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed instrument entitled “Investigating on the Effects of Cohabitation and Students Academic Performance Among the Post-Secondary School Students in Kaltungo”. The theoretical framework used for the study was the attachment theory. The analysis was executed with frequency distribution table. The findings revealed that the level of cohabitation among Post-Secondary students is significantly high. Also, there are effects of cohabitation on the academic performance of students as the majority of the students indicated that most of them cohabit to gain social influence, economic values, and protection from their spouses. It reveal some dangers of cohabitation on the students and the solutions of addressing the dangers were suggested. The study concluded that, parents should be visiting their children it the schools and also hostels/accommodation should the made available for the students. The study recommended that parents should show interest by paying unannounced visits to their children staying on campus to see how they are faring in school.

**Keywords:** Effects, Investigation, Cohabitation, Academic Performance, Post-Secondary School.

the well-being of the community. The inculcation of academic knowledge, skills, abilities, and proficiency among individuals is enhanced through learning and academic performance. The expectation of any academic system is quality performance and achievement among learners (Nyagosa, 2019). This is because students are the primary target of every academic institution; as such, the environment should foster learning outcomes among students.

In most Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo, Gombe State, Nigeria, there has been a persistent outcry regarding the poor performance of students on and off campus. Campus cohabitation is the factor this study intends to consider, as it affects students' academic performance. Cohabitation refers to a situation in which two people live together and are involved in an emotional and/or sexual intimate relationship. This is on the basis that they stay and spend their lives together without any legal backing.

Campus cohabitation is the situation where two students, a male and a female, live together as a married couple but are not married. There are common reasons for campus cohabitation, such as finding out if they are compatible for marriage, spending more time together to weave their routines and interests, and assessing their relationship. Another strong reason is for them to save money. Their finances are joined and used together, seeing it as a way to save on rent, goods, and other living expenses.



Cohabitation has negative effects, such as eventual breakups; the commitments on both partners may become unbearable, leading to misunderstandings and relationship failure. Cohabitation is a phenomenon pervading most, if not all, Post-Secondary institutions in Nigeria today. The act is so rampant that it has become the way of life on our campuses. Some social gatherings in schools give awards to the "best cohabiting couples," and those involved see nothing wrong with it; rather, they are proud of it, as is society.

According to Kramer (2017), the dangers associated with cohabitation are pronounced, and their consequences are reflected in the academic performance of those involved. Some of these dangers are the high rate of abortion in tertiary institutions, the threat of sexually transmitted diseases, and indulgence in other vices like stealing, lying, cheating, etc., and monotonous fondness. Cohabitation is widely accepted in our society today; those who are involved preach its benefits to their mates, leading many to embrace it. As the rate of Post-Secondary students cohabiting has greatly increased, the academic performance of students in schools has dropped as a result of cohabitation.

Most students or partners cohabiting have sexually transmitted diseases that can be easily transmitted to their partners. As the rate of cohabitation increases, reported cases of sexually transmitted diseases also increase. When a student is sick, they will not be able to carry out any academic activity, which is the beginning of failure. It may eventually lead to death, which is the end of all academic performance. Observation and personal interaction have also shown that those involved in cohabitation indulge in other anti-social ills such as stealing, lying, clubbing, cheating, drunkenness, suicide, killing, etc. A male partner cohabiting with his partner would like to impress the lady so she does not leave him for another. This requires money, which he may not have, and as such, he may go on to commit a lot of atrocities to meet the challenging demands of the opposite sex (Ofoegbu, 2021). This implies that most students who cohabit do so for the financial benefits.

Clarkberg et al. (2019) informed that most students, rather than focusing on their academic workload, resort to dubious means to satisfy their boyfriends or girlfriends. In the past, cohabitation was highly unethical, obscure, and even a taboo among people. Non-marital unions have become common because the meaning of the family has altered, as individualistic social values have progressively matured since the late 1940s (Ogunsola, 2018). Sociologists treat cohabitation as a distinct occurrence, not just because it has a negative effect on the academic performance of students, but because it is an unhealthy practice with economic, social, educational, and religious implications for the family and society at large. While cohabitation before marriage was previously not viewed as the right thing to do, it is now sometimes seen as a "necessity." Some people do it as preparation for marriage, while others do it out of convenience.



The increase in the population of Post-Secondary students and the government's inability to adequately provide social infrastructures (hostels) and funding for higher education in Nigeria have led to risky coping mechanisms among students. Students in Post-Secondary institutions have been involved in a deviant form of cohabitation known as "campus marriage," "pre-test marriage," or "one-bed marriage". A situation where students of the opposite sex are forced to live together and share things in common without any authorization portends danger to the sanctity of the institution of marriage and family. It is against the norms and values of our society to allow young and unmarried couples to live together, especially where they do not have any family ties. Most students who live together hide it from their parents. This exposes the students to all forms of risk and harm as they continue to cohabit. Students who live together with their partners lack family support and are susceptible to attack and abuse from outsiders and even their partners. Often, society frowns on unmarried adults cohabiting. Most institutions make laws to control indecent dressing among students without paying attention to cohabitation among them.

Students on campus and society at large should say "No" to cohabitation to spare themselves the pain and grief of knowing that they were being used rather than loved. It is against this backdrop that this study was carried out on "Investigating into the Effects of Cohabitation and Students' Academic Performance Among the Post-Secondary School Students in Kaltungo, Gombe State, Nigeria."

### **Statement of the Problem**

Cohabitation is a phenomenon pervading most, if not all, of the Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo today. The practice is so prevalent that it has become a usual way of campus life. Cohabitation is generally regarded as the act of a man and woman living together, sometimes in a marital relationship without being married. Observation from a cursory look at our various campuses today showed that a large number of unmarried students indulge in the act of cohabiting, which has resulted in poor academic performance and dreaded diseases while in school.

Cohabiting students most likely come in contact with deadly transmitted infections such as STDs. This practice of cohabiting has serious health issues for female students who may indulge in the use of oral contraceptives to prevent unwanted pregnancy that may lead to truncated educational aspirations. When pregnancy does occur, sometimes the female student is more likely to seek abortion as a way out. This practice of seeking abortion may lead to another problem of exposing the female students to quack doctors who are not licensed practitioners, resulting in health complications with serious negative spillover effects in the long run. However, some students may frown at abortion, giving birth to



unwanted babies that were not planned for, bringing consequences including a threatened academic pursuit.

This is evident in the yearly results obtained by students of Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo, Gombe State, Nigeria. The deteriorating performance has also resulted in half-baked graduates who cannot withstand the test of time in the business world. Government policy on students' hostel accommodation may have its good side, but from the researcher's observation, the inability of the institutions to expand and build new hostels has forced several students to look outward for accommodation. This has led to the emergence of an unacceptable trend in most Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo. Some call it campus marriage, which is conventionally known as "cohabitation" among students, since it is an indecent act perpetrated on and off campus. Because of these problems, the researcher took a key interest to bring a solution to it.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To find out the common types of cohabitation among the Post-Secondary school students in Kaltungo.
- ii. To examine the effects of students cohabiting in Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo.
- iii. To examine the Dangers of cohabitation on the future of the students.
- iv. To find out some possible solution to the issues of cohabitation on the students.

### **Research Questions**

- i. What are the common types of cohabitation among the Post-Secondary school students in Kaltungo?
- ii. What are the effects of students cohabiting in Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo?
- iii. What are the Dangers of cohabitation on the future of the students?
- iv. What are the possible solution to the issues of cohabitation on the students?

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the research is limited to Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo Local Government Area of Gombe State, Nigeria.

### **Definition of Cohabitation/Concept of Cohabitation**

Cohabitation can also be defined as a living arrangement in which an unmarried couple lives together in a long or short-term relationship that resembles a married couple's cohabitation rather than marriage, for a variety of reasons. Cohabitation is not commonly used to describe people who share a living space, or those called "roommates." It is most commonly used in reference to heterosexual couples (Clarkberg et al., 2019).



Cohabitation is when two people who are romantically involved choose to live together without making the formal commitment of marriage. Cohabiting couples are typically emotionally and sexually intimate. The term 'cohabitation' is not commonly used to describe people who are merely sharing a living space or who call themselves 'roommates.' Cohabitation can pertain to either heterosexual or same-sex couples, but it is most commonly used in reference to heterosexual couples.

Abdullahi (2019) states that cohabitation can be encapsulated as both a status and a process, and it is also an alternative type of housing for at least one of the cohabiters. He further stated that cohabitation is not a new phenomenon. However, the prevalence and popular acceptance of the phenomenon have shifted contemporary opinion about it from a deviant or alternative lifestyle choice to a normative experience for young men and women.

Pollard and Harris (2017), examine cohabitation as a new form of living arrangement in a situation of flux associated with changing lifestyles, societal values, and norms. He further stated that students in institutions of higher learning also manifest this phenomenon. Student cohabitation has attracted several policies, academic research and debates in recent times. Students at higher educational institutions generally experience a critical situation of high tuition fees and other associated college costs related to service provision, especially on-campus accommodation.

Cohabitation as a form of relationship is highly popular among young adults, particularly those in tertiary institutions who are not close to their parents. Their quest for independence and love for the opposite sex has been attributed as the remote cause of cohabitation. Ermisch and Francesconi (2020) reported that most students cohabit due to poverty, inability to secure accommodation, and other related factors such as poor economic conditions and poor educational background. Svodziwa and Kurete (2017) noted that cohabitation among students is mostly associated with or caused by inadequate accommodation. Cohabitation is an intimate sexual union between two unmarried partners who share the same living quarters for a sustained period of time.

Cohabitation, according to Bower and Christopherson (2019), is a union of persons of opposite sex staying together, but not married. An increase in the acceptability of cohabitation can be viewed as evidence of the weakening social norms related to marriage, known as the deinstitutionalization of marriage (Bumpass & Lu, 2016). This implies that the level of cohabiting unions was common to some sub-groups, such as the poor, those whose marriages had broken up, some rural dwellers, and those who were ideologically opposed to marriage (Kiernan, 2020). During the late 2000s and early 2001, the institution of marriage began to change fundamentally in many parts of Nigeria. This led to cases where couples began to live together outside of marriage (Perelli, Harris &



Gassen, 2018). In addition, some social changes have led to weakening traditional and religious authority, increasing individualism, urbanization, mass education, rising women's socioeconomic status, and the growth of consumerism (Mashau, 2019). To this end, the level of awareness in society can limit the spread of cohabitation among Post-Secondary school students. In most parts of Africa, cohabitation could be attributed to colonialism; it gradually broke down African communal living patterns by the acculturation of foreign cultural norms and values. This transcended to an outgrowth of historical changes in sexual behaviour, such as the increased acceptance of sexual relations outside of marriage that emanate from the rise of the ideology of individualism (Rindfuss & VandenHeuvel, 2020). This ideology of individualism is exacerbated by rapid urbanization, housing problems, and homelessness.

This has led to various forms of union formation, ranging from overcrowding to cohabitation in African urban centres. Omonijo (2015) attributed the prevalence (high level) of cohabitation among Nigerian youths to the sex revolution in Europe and America. The author emphasised that the impact of foreign ideas, values, and norms, as well as social and mass communication, and the conditions of urban life, on the behaviour and attitudes of Nigerian adolescents is on the increase.

### **Types of Cohabitation among Post-Secondary School Students in Kaltungo**

The following are some types of cohabitation among Post-Secondary schools:

- i. Pre-marital Cohabitation ("Trial Marriage"):** Unmarried couples in a romantic relationship live together to test compatibility before deciding on marriage. This is the most common type in Western cultures.
- ii. Post-Marital Cohabitation:** Typically refers to older adults (often divorced or widowed) who choose to live with a new partner but do not remarry, often to protect pensions, inheritances, or alimony.
- iii. Cohabitation as an Alternative to Marriage:** Couples who are committed long-term and may even have children together, but reject the legal or religious institution of marriage. They see themselves as life partners without the legal contract.
- iv. Economic Convenience:** Living together primarily to split rent, utilities, and living costs. This can include romantic couples, but also friends or even strangers.
- v. Caregiving Cohabitation:** When an elderly parent moves in with an adult child, or a sibling moves in to help another with a disability or illness. The primary bond is family, but the arrangement is based on practical support.
- vi. Intentional Community (Commune):** A group of people (not necessarily related or romantic) who choose to live together based on shared values, such as spirituality, ecology, or simple living. They often share resources and chores.



**vii. Living Apart Together (LAT):** A modern type where couples are in a committed relationship but maintain separate residences. They cohabit part-time (e.g., weekends) but value their personal space and independence during the week.

**viii. Multigenerational Cohabitation:** Multiple generations of a family living under one roof (e.g., grandparents, parents, and grandchildren). Common in many cultures and increasingly common in the West due to economic pressures.

#### **Effects of Students Cohabiting in Post-Secondary Schools in Kaltungo**

- i. **Unwanted pregnancy:** Undoubtedly, many students are victims of cohabitation in Post-Secondary schools, and this affects their lives. For instance, a female student who got pregnant with her coursemate's child could not complete her programme years ago because of the unwanted pregnancy.
- ii. **Lack of concentration:** Cohabitation is a major challenge for many students in Post-Secondary schools because once they cohabit, it may be difficult for them to focus on their education. They will procrastinate in their studies; similarly, the students involved always lose concentration, which leads to widespread failure.
- iii. **Spread of diseases:** Many students in Post-Secondary schools today contract diseases such as HIV, Syphilis, and communicable diseases through cohabiting. For instance, two female students of a university contracted different types of diseases, which led to the end of their studies through cohabiting with their partners on campus.
- iv. **Anti-social behaviour:** In fact, many students join bad gangs because of cohabiting with bad friends. For instance, one student lost her life because she cohabited with her mate, who was an armed robber, which led to the end of her career. Even many students become drug addicts in Post-Secondary schools through cohabiting, and this affects their academic performance.
- v. **Lose of priorities:** Study do lost focus and concentration on the reason why they are in school.

#### **Dangers on cohabitation among the post secondary students**

1. **Distraction from Studies:** Living with a partner can be emotionally consuming. Relationship ups and downs, coupled with the time investment required to maintain a household, can divert focus and energy away from coursework, readings, and exam preparation.
2. **Difficult Study Environment:** Maintaining a quiet, productive study environment can be challenging with a partner present, especially if they have different



- schedules, social habits, or noise levels. This can lead to decreased academic performance for one or both individuals.
3. **Financial Dependency:** Students often have limited and unstable incomes. Cohabiting can create a financial dependency that makes it difficult to leave an unhappy or unhealthy relationship. One partner might rely on the other for rent or shared expenses.
  4. **Economic Instability:** If the relationship ends, it can create a sudden financial crisis. Breaking a lease, finding new housing on short notice, and covering moving costs can be financially devastating for a student.
  5. **Shared Debt and Obligations:** Signing a lease together creates a joint legal and financial obligation. If one person moves out, the other is often left responsible for the full rent, leading to debt or damage to their credit score.
  6. **"Sliding vs. Deciding":** Instead of making a conscious, committed decision about their future (like engagement), couples in a cohabiting relationship can often "slide" into marriage or continued cohabitation due to inertia, convenience, or financial ties. This can lead to marrying someone they wouldn't have otherwise chosen.
  7. **Premature Commitment:** Living together can accelerate the pace of a relationship, forcing a level of intimacy and commitment that the individuals who are still developing their own identities—may not be emotionally ready for.
  8. **Difficulty Ending an Unhealthy Relationship:** The practical barriers to separating (shared lease, shared belongings, financial entanglement) can trap students in unhealthy or even abusive relationships long after they would have otherwise left.
  9. **Social Isolation:** Moving in with a partner can lead to withdrawal from the broader campus community. Time that would have been spent with friends, in clubs, or at campus events is spent at home. This can stunt the development of a diverse and supportive social network.
  11. **Loss of Independence:** The university years are a critical period for identity formation. Cohabitation requires constant compromise and negotiation, which can limit opportunities for self-discovery, solo travel, and developing independent life skills.
  12. **Limiting Life Experiences:** Being in a serious live-in relationship can prevent students from having a wide range of experiences, such as studying abroad, taking an internship in another city, or simply living with a variety of roommates who expose them to different perspectives.
  13. **Domestic Violence:** The stress of financial strain, academic pressure, and the intensity of a live-in relationship can, in some cases, escalate conflicts and contribute to an environment where domestic violence is more likely to occur.



14. **Sexual Health Risks:** The perceived monogamy of a cohabiting relationship can lead to a relaxation of safe sex practices. If the relationship is not fully committed or exclusive, this can increase the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy.

#### **Possible Solutions to the problem of students Cohabitation**

1. **Increase On-Campus Accommodation:** Universities should build more, affordable, and secure hostels to reduce the necessity of off-campus living.
2. **Strict Off-Campus Monitoring:** School authorities should monitor off-campus residential areas to curb excessive behavior and cohabitation.
3. **Mandatory Orientation Programs:** Schools should organize orientation for new students regarding the risks of cohabitation, unwanted pregnancy, and STDs.
4. **Strengthen Counseling Units:** Counseling departments should be equipped to provide guidance on reproductive health, social skills, and the, distractions of cohabitation.
5. **Strict Enforcement of Rules:** Implement and enforce strict regulations against opposite-sex cohabitation, especially for first-year students.
6. **Collaborate with Community Leaders:** Partner with local landlords and community leaders to monitor and report student cohabitation.
7. **Encourage Religious/Moral Groups:** Foster student groups that promote morality,, chastity, and
8. **Regular Unscheduled Visits:** Parents should make frequent, surprise visits to their children to monitor their lifestyle.
9. **Enhanced Communication:** Parents should maintain open communication lines to discuss the dangers of premature cohabitation.
10. **Financial Monitoring:** Regular, consistent, and adequate financial support can prevent students from seeking financial support from opposite-sex partners.
11. **Inculcate Moral Training:** Parents should emphasize the importance of moral values and academic success over peer acceptance.
12. **Implement Morality Training Technique (MTT):** Students should be trained in self-control and moral decision-making.
13. **Peer Support Groups:** Encourage positive peer pressure through study groups, religious groups, and sports activities.
15. **Time Management Workshops:** Help students balance relationships and academics through workshops on time management.
16. **Health Education:** Provide seminars on the health hazards of cohabitation, including abortion, STDs, and HIV/AIDS.



17. **Premarital Counseling Education:** Educate students on why cohabitation is not a suitable substitute for marriage.
18. **Establish Firm Boundaries:** Students who choose to live together should establish clear, written rules regarding space, chores, and privacy to reduce conflict.
19. **Develop Self-Control:** Students should be taught to manage sexual urges and prioritize academic pursuits.
20. **Proactive Conflict Resolution:** Learn to address issues directly and immediately, rather than letting them fester, to avoid volatile, abusive situations.
21. **Determination:** Make it a choice not to engaged into cohabitation.

### **Attachment Theory:**

Attachment theory can provide a valuable theoretical framework for understanding the potential impact of campus cohabitation on students' academic performance at the tertiary level. Developed by John Bowlby in 1969, attachment theory focuses on the formation and quality of emotional bonds between individuals, particularly in the context of early caregiver-infant relationships. Applying attachment theory to the topic of campus cohabitation, it can be argued that the transition to living together with a romantic partner or roommates in a campus setting may influence students' attachment dynamics and subsequently affect their academic performance. According to attachment theory, individuals develop internal working models based on their early attachment experiences, which shape their expectations, beliefs, and behaviours in subsequent relationships.

When students engage in cohabitation, their attachment dynamics may be activated as they navigate the challenges and demands of living together. Positive and secure attachment experiences in cohabitation, characterized by open communication, emotional support, and a sense of safety, may facilitate an environment conducive to academic success. Students who feel secure and supported in their cohabitation arrangements may experience less stress and emotional distress, allowing them to focus on their studies and perform well academically. Conversely, negative or insecure attachment experiences in campus cohabitation, such as conflict, lack of emotional availability, or inconsistent support, may contribute to emotional distress, interpersonal difficulties, and compromised academic performance. Students who experience relationship difficulties or distress within their cohabitation arrangements may find it challenging to concentrate on their studies, leading to decreased motivation, increased stress levels, and lower academic achievement.

Moreover, attachment theory suggests that individuals may seek to replicate familiar attachment patterns in their adult relationships. If students have experienced insecure or unhealthy attachment dynamics in their early life, they may unintentionally recreate similar patterns in their cohabitation relationships, potentially leading to negative



outcomes for their academic performance.

By utilizing attachment theory as a theoretical framework, researchers can explore the various ways in which attachment dynamics within campus cohabitation relationships may impact students' academic performance. This framework allows for the examination of factors such as emotional support, communication patterns, conflict resolution strategies, and the influence of past attachment experiences on students' adjustment and academic outcomes. Understanding the role of attachment dynamics in the context of campus cohabitation can inform interventions and support systems that promote positive relationship experiences and optimize students' academic success.

### Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is the survey design. Survey research is a method which involves a structured questionnaire given to respondents for eliciting information. The descriptive survey design was relevant to this study as the researcher was only to report the socioeconomic factors that influence the student's academic performance without manipulating variables. The population for this research study consists of Post-Secondary school students numbering two thousand (2,000). Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the required respondents in the study. The first stage involves the stratification of the population. The second stage was stratification based on the number of institutions that were considered in the study; students were randomly selected to constitute the sample of the institution to participate in the study. A sample of 300 students was used. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The instrument comprised three sections; section A elicited information on personal data of the respondents. Data were collected through the administration of the instrument using research assistants. In each school, the researchers assured the students of confidentiality in terms of responses supplied. The researchers also encouraged the respondents to rate themselves as honestly as possible in completing the questionnaire. All copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved on the spot to ensure 100 percent return from the sampled schools. A uniform system of administering the copies of the questionnaire was adopted in all the schools, and copies given out were retrieved on the same day of administration.

### Results and Discussion

Table 1: Status of the Respondents

| S/no | Items        | Frequency  | Percentage |
|------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1    | Male         | 201        | 67         |
| 2    | Female       | 99         | 33         |
|      | <b>Total</b> | <b>300</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Primary Data, 2026



Table 1 shows that, Male are the dominant respondents of the study with 67% while Female are 33% from the total population.

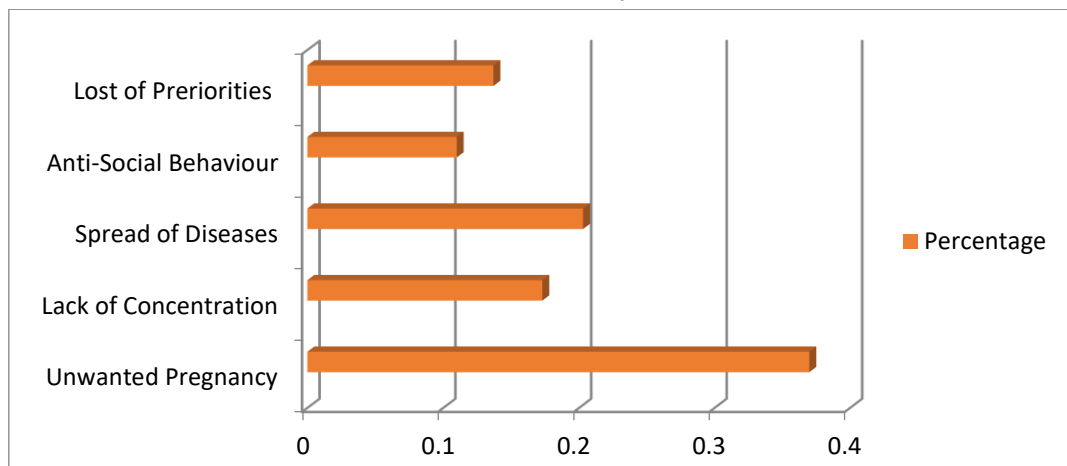
**Table 2:** Types of Cohabitation among Post Secondary School Students

| S/no         | Items                                      | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|--|------------|------------|
| 1            | Pre-Marital Cohabitation                   | 21         | 7          |
| 2            | Post-Marital Cohabitation                  | 11         | 3.7        |
| 3            | Cohabitation as an Alternative to Marriage | 30         | 10         |
| 4            | Economic Convenient                        | 79         | 26.3       |
| 5            | Caregiving Cohabitation                    | 107        | 35.7       |
| 6            | Intentional Community (Commune)            | 3          | 1          |
| 7            | Living Together                            | 43         | 14.3       |
| 8            | Multigenerational Cohabitation             | 6          | 2          |
| <b>Total</b> |  | <b>300</b> | <b>100</b> |

**Source:** Primary Data, 2026

Table 2 shows that, 7% of the respondents engaged into pre-marital cohabitation in the school, 3.7% are for post-marital cohabitation and 10% of the respondents are in for cohabitation as an alternative to marriage. Out of the population, 26.3% are in just for economic again while 35.7% are just in for caregiving cohabitation. 3% of the respondents are in for intentional commune cohabitation. 14.3% are in for cohabitation just to be living together and finally, 2% are in for multigenerational cohabitation in the post secondary school.

**Table 3:** Effects of Cohabitation on Post Secondary School Students



**Source:** Primary Data, 2026



Table 3 shows that, 37% of the respondents believed that the key effects of cohabitation is unwanted pregnancy, 17.3% believed that it effects lead to lack of concentration while 20.3% of the respondents said that spread of disease is the key effects. Out of the population, 11% believed that anti-social behaviour is the key effects and finally, 13.7% believed lost of priorities is the highest effect of cohabitation among students in the post secondary school.

**Table 4:** Future Dangers of Cohabitation among Post Secondary School

| S/no | Items                       | Frequency  | Percentage |
|------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1    | Distraction from Studies    | 54         | 18         |
| 2    | Financial Dependency        | 61         | 20.3       |
| 3    | Economic Instabilities      | 48         | 16         |
| 4    | Shared Debt and Obligations | 38         | 12.7       |
| 5    | Premature Commitment        | 36         | 12         |
| 6    | Social Isolation            | 28         | 9.3        |
| 7    | Social Health Risk          | 35         | 11.7       |
|      | <b>Total</b>                | <b>300</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 4 shows that, cohabitation can be of distraction to the students in times of their studies with 18%, 20.3% believed that the future damage on the financial dependency. Out of the population, 16% believed that the students cohabitation can face economic instability while 12.7% said there will the issue of sharing debt and obligation due to cohabitation. 12% believed the issue of premature commitment will arise, 9.3% said social isolation will be a danger of cohabitation and finally, 11.7% believed that social health risk is a key danger of cohabitation among students in the post secondary school.

**Table 5:** Solutions to Cohabitation among Post Secondary School

| S/no | Items                     | Frequency  | Percentage |
|------|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1    | Increase Accommodation    | 129        | 43         |
| 2    | Regular Unscheduled Visit | 66         | 22         |
| 3    | Financial Monitoring      | 40         | 13.3       |
| 4    | Premarital Counseling     | 38         | 12.7       |
| 5    | Peer Support Groups       | 27         | 9          |
|      | <b>Total</b>              | <b>300</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 5 shows some solutions to the problems and challenges of cohabitation among the post secondary school students 43% of the respondents believed that increasing



accommodation by the schools will be the best solution to the problem of cohabitation while 22% said the best solution is through regular unscheduled visit by parents or guidance's. Out of the population, 13.3% believed that financial monitoring is the best solution while 12.7% believed that premarital counseling is the best and finally 9% believed peer support groups is the best.

### Summary of Findings

Undoubtedly, cohabitation contributed highly to the problems of many students in Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo. Moreover, the challenges many students are facing today in Post-Secondary schools occur through cohabiting, although the majority of those students believed it is part of enjoyment, while others thought it the only way for a true relationship for future partnership. However, many relationships involving cohabitation ended sadly and achieved nothing in their studies.

The findings indicate that there is a high level of cohabitation among Post-Secondary school students. Thus, Omonijo (2016) attributed the prevalence (high level) of cohabitation among Nigerian youths to the sex revolution in Europe and America. The author emphasised that the impact of foreign ideas, values, and norms, as well as social and mass communication and conditions of urban life on the behaviour and attitude of Nigerian adolescents, are on the increase. On how some factors influence cohabitation and students' academic performance, the finding shows a significant influence of cohabitation on the academic performance of students, as confirmed by Zheng (2016). The findings illustrate social factors as a strong determinant of cohabitation among students in Post-Secondary schools. Examining the extent to which these factors influence the academic performance of cohabiting students in Post-Secondary schools, the majority of the students indicated that most of them cohabit to gain social influence and protection from their spouses. Thus, Astute (2021) findings revealed that social factors have a significant impact on students' cohabitation. To this end, most students cohabit because of the social influence of their spouse in school. It was also found that most students who cohabit feel that their intentions of cohabiting are directly dependent on the need to be influential in school.

### Conclusion

Cohabitation among students of Post-Secondary schools in Kaltungo is quite common and caused mainly by lack of accommodation, problems with roommates, educational, social, and economic factors, among others. The students perceive cohabitation as normal and none of the business of their friends in school. The high awareness of cohabitation among the students generally suggests the acceptance of this lifestyle. However, the study



suggests that the students may not have been adequately counseled to handle the social implications of cohabitation. Most of the cohabiting students refused to let their parents know about their cohabitation status while in school. Therefore, the idea of cohabiting with someone your parents never approved portends a great danger to the students when things go wrong. Moreover, the school security may not be able to regulate the conduct of students living off-campus where cohabitation occurs.

The root cause of cohabitation among Post-Secondary school students in Kaltungo has been observed to be that the institutions have more male hostels than female hostels on the campus. This makes it difficult for the school to adequately cater to the accommodation needs of numerous female students in the university. This lack of accommodation for female students predisposes them to search for alternative means of accommodation, with the options of cohabitation often available. Cohabitation could influence the life and attitude of the students positively or negatively. It exposes students to pre-marital sex, unwanted pregnancies, abortion complications, and sexually transmitted diseases. The trauma the students encounter at this stage could affect future relationships and the perception of the opposite sex. On the other hand, where the cohabiters have good experiences, it fosters tolerance and encourages them to know each other better for a permanent future relationship through marriage. Another important issue here is the age at which the students engage in cohabitation. It was observed that some of the students were in their late teens or early 20s and were not ready for marriage. They just see cohabitation as fun and an opportunity to explore their new-found independence and liberty in school.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. All institutions should provide adequate accommodations for all students to live on campus and not off campus.
2. Parents should do their best in supervising their children's accommodations frequently without informing the children of their visitation.
3. Parents should have an interest in their children's education. This is because students would perform better academically with parents' involvement. Parents should also be encouraged to buy extra textbooks and other learning materials for the students to use at home, especially for day scholars.
4. Concerted efforts should be made to provide adequate on-campus hostel facilities to accommodate the growing student population in Post-Secondary schools. In this regard, accommodation of virtually all the students who are not married should be part of the requirement for the accreditation of courses/programmes.



5. Functional Counselling units should be promoted. It is not enough to appoint counsellors; there should be a conducive working environment in terms of an appropriate counsellor/student population ratio, funding of the center for purposes of access to good psychological tests, capacity for workshops and seminars, etc.
6. Collaboration between parents and the institutions should be nurtured so that the institutions can justify the need for parental supervision of undergraduates, which is poorly (if at all) done now.
7. Campus radio should be used more effectively to promote healthy relationships across gender on campus.
8. There should be collaboration between the institution authorities and the landlords of off-campus accommodation facilities so that rules and disciplinary measures applicable to on-campus students can be extended to off-campus students. This will require awareness creation and collaboration with student union bodies.

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