

**SEXUAL INTIMIDATION AND DESIRE FOR GOOD GRADES: UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF 'SEXUALISED GRADES' IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES**

**Rahman Olanrewaju Saheed<sup>1\*</sup>, Salahu Tunde Saliman<sup>2</sup> & Abdulmalik Edicha<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Work, University of Ilorin, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

\*lanreandrahman@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT:** Sexual intimidation, a form of sexual and gender-based violence within academic institutions remains a global concern, raising socio-legal and psychological implications. The heightened sensitivity of such acts within institutions dedicated to knowledge dissemination underscores the urgency of understanding the multifaceted factors at play. Hence, this study delves into the prevalent issue of 'sexualised grades' at the Federal University Wukari, Nigeria, exploring how the power imbalance between lecturer and students on one hand, and the desire for good grades by the students contributes to the phenomenon of sexualised grades. The study engaged a sample of 255 undergraduate students, employing quantitative research methods. Chi-square tests were employed to analyse the statistical significance of key findings. The research establishes a compelling connection between students and lecturers, revealing a pattern where sexual favours are exchanged for academic success. The study revealed a significant relationship between male lecturers demanding sex from the students and the prevalence of sex for grades ( $\chi^2=22.92$ ,  $P<0.001$ ); the study further revealed that lack of sexual discipline among lecturers is a contributing factor to the prevalence of sex for grade ( $\chi^2=29.75$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Additionally, the study unveils the significant relationship between peer influence and the practice of sex for grade ( $\chi^2=53.60$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Lastly, the study revealed a significant relationship between academic laziness of female students and the practice of sex for grade ( $\chi^2=88.81$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Thus, the issue of sex for grade transcends a simple power imbalance and extends into the realm of individual agency and personal choices. Hence, the study recommends redesigning communication channels for enlightenment campaigns, comprehensive workshops, and seminars for both staff and students to address socio-psychological temptations. Institutional policies should undergo review to ensure strict compliance and foster a culture that prioritizes ethical conduct. In conclusion, the study emphasizes that the prevalence of 'sex for grade' within academic institutions is a problematic and multifaceted issue that reveals a complex interplay of power dynamics and individual motivations.

**Keywords:** Academic-environment, Good-grades, Sexual-harassment, Intimidation, Family-pressure.

## INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment or intimidation remains a sexual health and human rights violation across the world. Its prevalence within higher education institutions poses a global challenge, with multifaceted implications encompassing socio-legal and psychological dimensions. The sensitivity of this issue becomes even more pronounced when such acts are perpetrated in environments dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the establishment of global discipline. The most shocking form of sexual intimidation in educational institutions is the phenomenon of sex for grades.

Sex for grades refers to the exchange of sexual favours for academic grades, representing a form of transactional dynamics within academic institutions (Ekundayo & Akinsuroju, 2022). This phenomenon, also known as 'transactional sex,' 'sexually transmitted grades,' or 'quid pro quo,' is recognized as a manifestation of sexual harassment, creating a toxic campus climate (Manuh, Gariba & Budu, 2007; Bakari & Leachm, 2008; Arogundade, 2019).

The menace of sex for grades is not peculiar to any region, it emerges as a global problem infiltrating higher education institutions. Its pervasive nature affects interactions within academic settings globally (Lussier, 2009; & Onoyase, 2019). For instance, in the United States, Wood et al. (2018), found that 19% of students reported faculty/staff of sexual intimidation/harassment, and Rosenthal et al. (2016) found that 38% of female graduate students had experienced staff-perpetrated sexual harassment. Similarly, in Africa, a study in a Zambian University shows about 54.1% of students to have directly experienced or had knowledge of sexual intimidation on campus (Menon et al. 2014). In Kyambogo University, Uganda, a male lecturer was accused of demanding sex from female students for favourable marks. Similar cases have been reported in Morocco where four lecturers faced accusations of offering better grades in exchange for sex, and at the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), where 23 students were suspended for engaging in sex-for-marks activities, illustrate the pervasive nature of the issue (Channels Television, 2021; Al Jazeera Media Network, 2021). This global perspective underscores the urgency for concerted efforts in investigating and addressing sex-for-grades issues to maintain the integrity of academic institutions worldwide.

Coincidentally, Nigeria is not immune to the prevalence of sexual intimidation and the phenomenon of sex for grade. The prevalence of sex-for-grade in Nigerian educational institutions is not only troubling but also disheartening, indicating a trend that is increasingly becoming normalized and rationalized, despite the serious consequences it carries for both the involved parties and society at large. Numerous reported cases highlight the severity of the problem across various Nigerian universities. For instance, at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (OAU), a professor in the Department of Management Accounting engaged in five instances of sexual intercourse in exchange for marks, resulting in the manipulation of a student's score from 33% to a percentage of her choice (Iyabo, 2021; Punch, April 15, 2018). Similarly, at the University of Lagos (UNILAG), a lecturer sexually assaulted a student during project supervision, using his position to threaten her academic progress if she resisted (Sunnewsonline.com, June 1, 2018). At Ambrose Alli University, an engineering lecturer was implicated in a seven-minute recorded video of a sexual harassment conversation with female students (Usman, 2018; Vanguard Newspapers, 2018). Also, at Lagos State University, a lecturer was caught pants down in a hotel room while trying to have sexual intimacy with a 200-level female student; and at Osun State University, another lecturer was caught on video in a hotel room with a female student, who used her laptop to record the act and shared it on

social media (News Agency of Nigeria, 2018). Furthermore, in the University of Calabar, a senior Faculty of Law lecturer was accused of sexually harassing female students just like in the University of Port Harcourt where a lecturer engaged in sexual relations with a female student, demanded a threesome and had the student pay for the hotel room (Ewuzie, 2019). More disturbingly, in Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU) fourteen lecturers were found guilty of sexually abusing students for marks. These cases, along with others across the globe collectively underscore the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to address the deeply entrenched issue of sexual exploitation in exchange for academic advantages.

The implications of these incidents go beyond individual cases, raising questions about the effectiveness of institutional safeguards, ethical standards, and the overall safety of students within the higher education system. The reported cases of sexual misconduct within various Nigerian universities reveal the alarming and pervasive nature of the sex-for-grades issue. These instances exemplify the disturbing power imbalances and ethical breaches within academic institutions, with severe implications for both the victims and the integrity of the education system.

Owing to the troubling and endemic nature of the incidents of sexual harassment in tertiary institutions and the growing safety concerns, coupled with diluted measures to address this recklessness, the Nigeria Senate, at its plenary session on Tuesday, July 7th, 2020 passed the Sexual Harassment Bill, 2020 (SB 77) which seeks to prevent, prohibit and redress the sexual harassment of students in tertiary educational institutions (Punch, 2023). Despite these perceived proactive measures, the phenomenon of sexualised grades in Nigerian tertiary institutions ceased to reduce, as the stake is usually between the conditional offer of grades and wilful offer for sex. Thus, the issue of sex for grade is intricately complex.

The issue of sexualized grades in Nigerian tertiary institutions is a multifaceted problem, implicating both lecturers and students as active participants in this unethical behaviour. Typically, female students are the most vulnerable targets, susceptible to advances and exploitation by male lecturers. According to Imonikhe, Aluede, and Idogh (2012), male lecturers are often perceived as the main perpetrators, using their positions of authority to exploit academically struggling female students by demanding sexual favours in exchange for better grades. Adedokun (2005) supports this assertion, emphasizing the role of male academic staff as the key initiators of this exploitative act. The power dynamic in such situations is evident, with male lecturers preying on vulnerable female students who are both academically and, consequently, sexually exploited (Ogummokun, 2019).

Conversely, lecturers also face vulnerability, particularly from students who boldly attempt to leverage sex as a bargaining tool for better grades. Studies, including the insights provided by Okebukola (2018), reveal a different dimension where some female students take the initiative to offer sexual relationships to male lecturers in a bid to enhance their academic performance. The motivation for such actions is often linked to academic weaknesses, with the hope that engaging in sexual relationships will result in undeservedly favourable grades. Ibrahim, Sogbanmu, Omoju, and Ukwaja's (2020) study supports this perspective, noting that some lecturers who have engaged in such acts confessed that female students were the initiators. The study also highlights the complex motivations behind these interactions, indicating that some female students willingly participate to attain a perceived status of a "super girl" on campus. This suggests that one significant aspect of 'sexualized grade' revolves around the moral and sexual discipline of both lecturers and students. Studies, such as those by Kimberly and

Terrence (2010), highlight the lack of ethical conduct and self-restraint among these key actors. Academic laziness, family pressure, engagement in drug abuse, peer pressures, the pursuit of pleasure, and a lack of clear ambition are identified as prevalent motivations among students who indirectly seek favourable grades or upgrading from their lecturers (Kimberly & Terrence, 2010).

The intricate nature of these relationships becomes further apparent when considering the potential consequences. When the dynamics of these relationships sour, what initially may have been perceived as consensual can transform into allegations of sexual harassment. Birinxhikaj, & Guggisberg (2017) and Morrell et al., (2012), highlight the shift in perception when relationships go awry, underscoring the ambiguity surrounding the determination of culpability.

Moreover, the perpetuation of sexual harassment incidents is not solely attributed to the behaviour of individuals; rather, it is embedded within institutional structures and dynamics. Sundaram and Jackson (2018) suggest that endemic institutional support contributes to the continuation of sexualized grades. This implicates the broader organizational culture and the extent to which institutions foster an environment that either tolerates or condemns such misconduct. Additionally, conflicts of interest in the formulation and implementation of policies, as explored by Franklin, Taylor, and Beytagh (2017), play a crucial role. The presence of conflicting interests may lead to lax enforcement of preventive measures, exacerbating the issue.

Furthermore, the underreporting of sexual harassment cases adds another layer to the perpetuation of the problem. Yung (2015) emphasizes the significance of reporting mechanisms and how the lack of a robust system contributes to the concealment of incidents. Underreporting can be influenced by factors such as fear of retaliation, societal stigma, or a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the reporting process.

Regardless of the causative factors, both female students and male academic staff can be found engaging in professional misconduct related to sex for grades, adding a layer of complexity to the issue. The controversy and sensitivity surrounding the determination of sexual intimidation may escalate beyond the academic environment, potentially involving security investigations and legal proceedings (Ullman & Ferfolja, 2014; Zeng, 2020). Thus, the issue of sexualized grades is not only a violation of ethical standards but also a complex interplay of power dynamics, motivations, and shifting perceptions that warrant careful examination and comprehensive intervention within the higher education system. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this study was to investigate how the power imbalance, personal agency and motivations contributes to the practise and prevalence of 'sexualised grades' in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria.

## **Hypotheses**

To achieve the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between the desire for good grades and the practice of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari.

2. There is no significant relationship between the threat and intimidation from a male lecturer and the practice of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari.
3. There is no significant relationship between peer influence and the practice of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study intends to understand the major factors responsible for sex for grades, with other potential remote indications for sexual relationships between academic staff and undergraduate female students of Federal University Wukari, Nigeria. To achieve this, a survey design was employed to have greater insights into the major implications of underlying variables from informed participants. The population of the study was basically female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari, Nigeria, which cut across all the faculties and departments.

To collect data for the study, a validated questionnaire (with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.870) developed by Endurance (2023), was modified and employed as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire, titled the Sex-for-Grade Questionnaire (SfGQ), consisted of two sections tailored to the research objectives. Section A solicited demographic information from respondents, while Section B comprised questions directly related to sex-for-grade practices, aligning with the research inquiries. Respondents were instructed to assess each item in Section B on a Likert four-point scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," reflecting their perceptions and experiences regarding sex-for-grade encounters. The data was collected using an online questionnaire, distributed across the various social media groups that house the students of the University, by doing this, the researcher was able to eliminate response bias, selection bias, and sampling biases. Similarly, the questionnaire allowed for the collection of data from numerous students within a short time. The sample for the study was drawn from the population of the study using probability sampling procedures of convenient sampling.

A sample size of two hundred and fifty-five (255) respondents were drawn from the entire population of study. In application, only respondents who indicate their availability, interest, and agreement to participate in this research were considered. The survey, employed use of frequency tables to present the findings, while the Chi-square test of independence was used for the quantitative analysis. The rationale for utilising the chi-square test of independence in this investigation is based on several important factors. The variables being analysed in the research are categorical in nature. These variables include respondents' demographic characteristics and their stated experiences or attitudes towards sex-for-grade activities. Due to the categorical character of the data, the chi-square test is a suitable statistical tool for evaluating the relationships between these variables. Furthermore, the chi-square test relies on the assumption of independence between the variables under investigation and enables researchers to analyse the relationship between these variables and identify any patterns or potential dependencies in the data.

Moreover, the non-parametric nature of the chi-square test makes it suitable for analysing categorical data without requiring any assumptions about the distribution of the data. This feature is especially beneficial when working with variables that do not conform to normality assumptions or when the prerequisites for parametric tests are not met. More so, the

comprehensibility of chi-square test outcomes enables clear understanding and deduction about the association between the variables being examined.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	146	57.3%
Female	109	42.7%
<b>Age Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
15-20	128	50.2%
21-24	44	17.3%
25-28	49	19.2%
28-Above	34	13.3%
<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agriculture	58	22.8%
Education	42	16.5%
Engineering	18	7.1%
Physical sciences	57	22.4%
Social sciences	58	22.8%
Law	22	8.6%
<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
100	26	10.2%
200	49	19.2%
300	110	43.1%
400	56	22.0%
500	11	4.3%
Other	3	1.2%
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Christianity	217	85.1%
Islam	30	11.8%
Others	8	3.1%

**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.

*Note:* N= 255

The table presents the frequency and percentage of responses in various categories of the survey conducted. The response is divided into four categories, namely gender, age category, faculty, level, and religion. The table comprised of a total of two hundred and fifty-five (255) undergraduate students, mainly of male 146 (57.3%) and female 109 (42.7%), with majority of 300 level students totalling 110 (43.1%) respondents who participated in the survey.



**Table 2: Knowledge of Sex for Grade**

Question	Yes	No	Total
Have you heard of sex for grade in Federal University Wukari?	197	58	255
Are you aware that some female students make use of their bodies to get grades from lecturer or to pass a course?	197	58	255
Are you aware that some lecturers demand for sex from students in order to pass their course?	197	58	255
Do you suspect any of your female friends or classmates of having sex with a lecturer just to pass the course?	114	141	255
Do you know of any female student(s) who had or still having sex with a male lecturer just to pass the course?	99	156	255
Do you know of any male lecturer(s) demanding for sex from female student(s) to pass his course?	84	171	255

**Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.**

Table 2 above represents the distribution of students by knowledge of "sex for grades". By implication, the frequency table above shows the number and percentage of respondents who answered "yes" and "no" to each question. On the subject matter of awareness, 197 respondents (77.3%) reported that they had heard of sex for grades in FUW, while 58 respondents (22.7%) reported that they had not heard of it. This suggests a high level of awareness of sex for grades among the respondents, with 77.3% reporting in the affirmative. Furthermore, a significant number of respondents (around 30-40%) reported either suspecting or knowing of cases where students engage in sexual relationships with lecturers to pass their courses, or where lecturers demand sex in exchange for passing grades.

**Table 3: Perception Towards Sex for Grade**

Questions	response options	frequency	percentage
Do you think females who are having sex with male lecturers to have good grades should be condemned?	Yes	177	69.4%
	No	78	30.6%
	<b>Total</b>	255	100%
Do you think sex-for-grade is helping the students in their academics?	Yes	62	24.3%
	No	159	62.4%
	Maybe	34	13.3%
	<b>Total</b>	255	100%
What is your perception of sex-for-grade?	Immoral	147	57.6%
	Helpful	15	5.9%
	Harmful	33	12.9%
	Good	8	3.1%
	Bad	38	14.9%
	Can't say	14	5.5%
	<b>Total</b>	255	100%
How did you perceive students who indulge in sex-for-grade?	Doing what is needed to survive	64	25.1%
	Undisciplined	115	45.1%
	Promiscuous	21	8.2%

	Academically Weak	43	16.9%
	Neutral	12	4.7%
	<b>Total</b>	255	100%

*Source:* Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 3 presents the results of a survey conducted to determine the perception towards sex-for-grade among university students. The table shows the frequency and percentage of responses to four different questions.

In response to the question, the majority (69.4%) of respondents believed it is improper and morally disparaging, while 30.6% thought it is a means of survival. Regarding whether sex-for-grade helps students academically, only 24.3% of respondents believed it does, while 62.4% said it does not. Additionally, 13.3% were unsure. This result implies that sex-for-grade is not seen as an effective means of improving academic performance by a significant proportion of respondents.

The perception of respondents towards sex-for-grade varies. A majority (57.6%) see it as immoral, while only a small percentage (5.9%) view it as helpful. Additionally, 12.9% of respondents perceived sex-for-grade as harmful, 3.1% view it as good, 14.9% thought it is bad, and 5.5% could not say. The result indicates that the issue of sex-for-grade is viewed negatively by many respondents. Finally, the perception of respondents towards students who indulge in sex-for-grade also varies. A considerable proportion of respondents (45.1%) perceived such students as undisciplined, while 25.1% saw them as doing what is needed to survive. Additionally, 16.9% of respondents viewed such students as academically weak, 8.2% believed them as promiscuous, and only 4.7% were neutral. This finding suggests that the issue of sex-for-grade is perceived as a matter of discipline and character.

**Table 4: Factors Contributing to Sex for Grade**

<b>Factors Contributing Factors</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Total</b>
Having friends who engage in sex for grades as a motivating factor	115	90	38	8	4	255
Academic laziness among female students	85	146	18	4	2	255
Positive results from sex for grade as a motivating factor	122	82	41	8	2	255
Indecent dressing exposing female students to sex for grade	92	123	27	7	6	255
Emphasis on certificates such as the demand for first class or second class upper	84	34	38	93	6	255
Pressure from family members for good results	111	83	47	6	8	255



Fear of being perceived as a failure among peers	107	113	26	8	1	255
Poor moral upbringing contributing to involvement in sex for grade	114	98	34	6	3	255
Lack of sexual discipline among lecturers	100	80	56	12	7	255
Intimidation and threats from lecturers	124	87	31	7	6	255
High level of moral decadence in society	100	102	31	14	8	255
Male lecturers using their position to intimidate students	118	102	23	10	2	255

**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 4 above indicates factors contributing to sex for grade on campus; Each row represents a different factor that may contribute to sex for grade, and each column represents the response options of "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," "Strongly Disagree," and "Neutral.

The response presents the factors contributing to sex-for-grade in Federal University Wukari as perceived by the respondents. Each factor is evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agreed" to "strongly disagreed," and "neutral." Descriptive analysis of the response shows that academic laziness among the female students is the top most factor contributing to sex-for-grade in Federal University Wukari. 146 respondents agreed that academic laziness among female students was a contributing factor, followed by the intimidation and threat from the lecturer, which had 124 strongly agreed and 87 agreed.

Other factors that received high agreement from the respondents include; positive result of female students who indulge in sex-for-grades could be a motivating factor for other female students to indulge in sex-for-grades, which had 122 strongly agreed, 82 agreed, 41 disagreed, 8 strongly disagreed, and 2 neutral; indecent dressing was a factor exposing female students to sex-for-grade in FUW, which had 123 strongly agreed, 92 agreed, 27 disagreed, 7 strongly disagreed, and 6 neutral; and pressure from family members to graduate with good results is a contributing factor to female students' engagement in sex-for-grade in FUW, which had 111 strongly agreed, 83 agreed, 47 disagreed, 6 strongly disagreed, and 8 neutral.

Factors with a high level of disagreement include lack of sexual discipline among the lecturers, which had 100 strongly agreed, 80 agreed, 56 disagreed, 12 strongly disagreed, and 7 neutral, and sex-for-grade is happening because male lecturers are using their position to intimidate students, which had 118 strongly agreed, 102 agreed, 23 disagreed, 10 strongly disagreed, and 2 neutral.

The response provides insight into the perceived factors that contribute to sex-for-grade in FUW. Intimidation and threat from lecturers is the most agreed upon factor contributing to sex-for-grade, which suggests that may lecturers are using their influence to coerce students into having sexual relationship with them. Other factors such as pressure from family members,

positive results of female students engaging in sex-for-grade, and indecent dressing also contribute to sex-for-grade. The disagreement on the lack of sexual discipline among the lecturers as a contributing factor and the position of male lecturers as intimidators indicates that the respondents perceived that the issue is more complex than simple power dynamics between lecturers and students, and suggests that there may be other factors contributing to sex-for-grade that are yet to be explored.

**Table 5: Practice and Experience of Sex for Grade**

	yes	no	total
Has any male lecturer demanded for sex from you in order to pass you in his course or his colleague's course?	56	53	109
Have you had sex with a lecturer just to have good grades?	39	70	109
Will you be willing to have sex with a lecturer for you to have good grades?	35	35	70

*Source:* Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.

This frequency table provides a clear summary of the responses given by the participants regarding their experiences with sex-for-grade. From the table, it is evident that out of the 109 participants, 56 (51.4%) reported that a male lecturer has demanded for sex from them have been demanded for sex by a male lecturer in order to pass a course, while 53 (48.6%) reported that they have not. Similarly, 39 (35.8%) participants reported they have had sex with a lecturer just to have good grades, while 70 (64.2%) reported they have not. Interestingly, out the 70 (64.2%) participants who had never had sex with their lecturer, 35 (50%) indicated that they would be willing to have sex with a lecturer for good grades if presented with such opportunity.

The results of this frequency table are alarming and highlight the prevalence of sex-for-grade practices in Nigerian universities. The fact that over 50% of the participants reported being demanded for sex by a lecturer in order to pass a course is a clear indication of the level of moral decadence and abuse of power in our educational institutions. Similarly, the fact that almost 35.8% of the participants reported, having had sex with a lecturer for good grades is disturbing and raises serious concerns about the safety and welfare of female students in Nigerian universities.

The fact that of 70 respondents, 50% of the reported that they would be willing to have sex with a lecturer for good grades is also very worrisome. This indicates that the problem of sex-for-grade is not only perpetuated by male lecturers but is also being fuelled by female students who are willing to engage in such practices. It is important for universities and other stakeholders to take urgent steps to address this problem and create a safe and conducive learning environment for all students.

By implication, there is a significant presence of sex-for-grade in the university, as evidenced by the number of students who have been asked for sex in exchange for good grades, as well as the number of students who have engaged in sex with lecturers to obtain good grades. The high number of students who are willing to have sex with lecturers in order to obtain good grades also suggests, that there may be a culture of sexual harassment and exploitation of students in the university.

### Testing of Hypotheses

1.  $H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between the desire for good grades and the practice of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari
2.  $H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between the threat and intimidation from a male lecturer and the practise of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari.
3.  $H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between peer influence and the practice of sex for grades among female undergraduate students of Federal University Wukari

To determine which factors are most strongly associated with sex for grade, the phi coefficient was used, which is a measure of association for two categorical variables.

**Table 6: The phi coefficient Table**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Phi Coefficient</b>
Having friends who engage in sex for grades	<b>0.487</b>
Academic laziness among female students	0.419
Positive results from sex for grade	0.365
Indecent dressing exposing female students to sex	0.343
Emphasis on certificates such as the demand for grades	0.322

**Source:** SPSS output

The results of the phi coefficient indicate the strength and direction of the association between each factor and sex for grade. A phi coefficient of 1 indicates a perfect positive association, while a phi coefficient of 0 indicates no association. Based on the results, the highest phi coefficient was 0.487 for having friends who engage in sex for grades as a motivating factor, which implies a strong positive association with sex for grades. This suggests that students who have friends that engage in sex for grades are more likely to engage in the same behaviour.

The second highest phi coefficient was 0.419 for academic laziness among female students, which also indicates a strong positive association with sex for grade. This means that female students who exhibit academic laziness are more likely to engage in sex for grades as a way to obtain better grades without putting in the necessary effort. The other factors also showed positive associations, albeit weaker than the first two. This suggests that all the identified factors contribute to some extent to the prevalence of sex for grades in the university.

These results imply that, in order to reduce or eliminate the prevalence of sex for grade in Federal University Wukari and Nigerian tertiary institutions at large, it is important to address the factors that are most strongly associated with this behaviour. Efforts can be made to discourage students from having friends who engage in sex for grades as a motivating factor and to provide resources and support for female students who struggle with academic laziness. It may also be beneficial to address the cultural norms that contribute to the belief that positive results from sex for grade is a legitimate means of academic advancement and to promote alternative strategies for achieving success.

Furthermore, the results suggest that policies and interventions aimed at reducing sex for grade should also focus on addressing the social and environmental factors that enable this behavior, such as indecent dressing and pressure from family members. By addressing the factors that contribute to sex for grade, universities can create a safer and more supportive academic environment, where students are encouraged to succeed on the basis of their academic abilities and hard work, rather than engaging in sexual activities to achieve academic success.

In addition, an inferential analysis was conducted to determine the statistical significance of the factors contributing to sex for grades. Chi-square test for independence was employed to determine whether there is a significant association between each factor and the occurrence of sex for grades. The results of the chi-square test are shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Chi-Square Test Results for Factors Contributing to Sex for Grade**

Factors	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	p-value	Result
Having friends who engage in sex for grades as a motivating factor	53.60	4	<0.001	Significant
Academic laziness among female students	88.81	4	<0.001	Significant
Positive results from sex for grade as a motivating factor	33.43	4	<0.001	Significant
Fear of being perceived as a failure among peers	38.87	4	<0.001	Significant
Lack of sexual discipline among lecturers	22.92	4	<0.001	Significant
Intimidation and threats from lecturers	29.75	4	<0.001	Significant
Male lecturers using their position to intimidate students	32.79	4	<0.001	Significant

**Source:** Researcher's Fieldwork, 2023.

The table shows the chi-square value, degrees of freedom, p-value, and result for each factor contributing to sex for grade at the Federal University Wukari. The chi-square test was used to determine the association between the factors and sex for grade, with a significance level of 0.05.

All of the factors were found to be significant contributors to sex for grade, as evidenced by the p-values being less than 0.01. Academic laziness among female students had the highest chi-square value (88.81) and was considered a very significant contributor. Having friends who engage in sex for grades as a motivating factor, fear of being perceived as a failure among peers, and male lecturers using their position to intimidate students were also considered strong contributors to sex for grade, as their chi-square values were above 30.

Emphasis on certificates such as the demand for first class or second class upper, pressure from family members for good results, lack of sexual discipline among lecturers, intimidation and threats from lecturers, and high level of moral decadence in society were also found to be significant contributors, but their chi-square values were lower compared to other factors. As

presented in Table 6, all the factors contributing to sex for grades have a significant association with the occurrence of sex for grades at FUW, with p-values less than 0.05.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This study specifically addresses the factors influencing the pervasive issue of 'sexualised grades' and subsequent sexual harassment among female undergraduate students in Nigeria. The study's findings illuminate a disconcerting relationship dynamic between students and their lecturers, marked by the exchange of sexual favours for academic success. This phenomenon not only prevails within the academic setting but also manifests a distressing pattern that warrants careful examination. Specifically, a significant proportion of female participants, constituting 51.4% of the sample, reported instances where male lecturers demanded sexual favours as a prerequisite for passing a course. This revelation underscores a troubling power dynamic within the student-lecturer relationship, where the authority wielded by the lecturer is abused for personal gain.

Furthermore, the study delves into the acknowledgment of engaging in sexual acts by a noteworthy percentage of participants, totalling 35.8%. This statistic highlights a concerning willingness among students to compromise their personal boundaries to secure better grades. Intriguingly, the research notes that 50% of participants expressed a readiness to be sexually involved with their lecturers for the sake of academic success if presented with such an opportunity. This finding points to a deeply ingrained willingness among students to participate in and potentially repeat such compromising behaviours when assured of favourable academic outcomes. These revelations align with prior studies conducted by Lewine (2011), Cook (2007), and Calabrò et al., (2019), which similarly documented instances of the exchange of sexual favours for academic benefits. The consistent findings across multiple studies underscore the gravity and persistence of this issue within the academic sphere, necessitating a comprehensive understanding of its dynamics and the formulation of targeted interventions.

The implications of these findings are profound and extend beyond the immediate context of the study. The prevalence of sexual exchanges for academic success among students and lecturers signifies a systemic issue that demands urgent attention. The identified power dynamic, wherein lecturers leverage their authority to coerce students into engaging in inappropriate relationships, raises ethical and professional concerns within the academic institution.

The willingness of a significant percentage of students to participate in such behaviours suggests a normalization or acceptance of compromised ethical standards within the academic culture. This normalization can contribute to the perpetuation of a toxic environment that undermines the principles of integrity, trust, and mutual respect crucial for a healthy academic community. Moreover, the potential repetition of these behaviours when assured of academic success emphasizes the need for interventions that address the root causes of such willingness. Educational institutions must implement preventative measures, such as awareness campaigns, workshops, and institutional policies, to foster an environment that promotes ethical conduct and safeguards the well-being of students.

The research also delves into the intricate dynamics of the perpetuation of 'sex for grade,' shedding light on the substantial influence exerted by peer dynamics and societal pressures. Female students who engage in such transactions not only serve as active participants but also

function as catalysts in motivating their peers to follow suit ( $\chi^2=53.60$ ,  $Df=4$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). This influence contributes to the establishment of a culture where external pressures, such as societal expectations and familial aspirations for academic success, become integral contributing factors to the perpetuation of 'sex for grade.' The study's findings, supported by a significant number of respondents (122 strongly agreed, 82 agreed), align with the observations made by Wood et al. (2018).

Additionally, the study identifies indecent dressing as a significant factor exposing female students to the vulnerabilities of 'sex for grade' at the Federal University Wukari. The statistical analysis of the data, represented by the chi-square test ( $\chi^2= 30.45$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $P<0.001$ ), establishes a strong association between indecent dressing and the likelihood of engaging in 'sex for grade.' This empirical evidence aligns with the research conducted by Henry & Thornberry, (2010) confirming the role of dress code in influencing the prevalence of such exploitative relationships.

The implications of these findings extend beyond individual behaviours, emphasizing the intricate interplay between peer dynamics, societal pressures, and the perpetuation of 'sex for grade.' The observed influence of female students who have participated in such acts underscores the significance of peer networks in shaping behavioural norms within academic institutions. This influence not only normalizes unethical conduct but also contributes to the cultivation of a culture where compromising one's integrity for academic success becomes a perceived norm.

Furthermore, the identified association between indecent dressing and engagement in 'sex for grade' signifies the impact of societal expectations and norms on the vulnerability of female students. The statistically significant relationship, as indicated by the chi-square test, reinforces the need for interventions that address broader societal influences. Initiatives aimed at fostering a culture of academic integrity and discouraging the objectification of students based on their appearance are imperative to disrupt the entanglement of 'sex for grade' with societal expectations.

The study brings to the forefront critical institutional factors that significantly contribute to the prevailing issue of 'sex for grade' at the Federal University Wukari. The examination of the sexual discipline among lecturers reveals a noteworthy deficiency within the institution, as indicated by the statistical analysis ( $\chi^2=22.92$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). This lack of sexual discipline raises substantial concerns regarding the efficacy of the existing institutional frameworks in place to adequately address and prevent instances of sexual harassment. The statistical significance underscores the need for urgent attention to institutional policies and practices related to ethical conduct among academic staff.

Moreover, the research unveils an alarming pattern of intimidation tactics employed by male lecturers, as evidenced by the statistical findings ( $\chi^2=29.75$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). These educators exploit their positions of authority to indirectly coerce students into compromising situations, thereby perpetuating a toxic cycle of exploitative relationships. The statistical significance of the intimidation factor emphasizes the urgency of addressing the abuse of power within the academic setting and underscores the importance of fostering a safe and respectful learning environment.



The implications of these findings are profound and necessitate comprehensive interventions to rectify existing deficiencies. The observed lack of sexual discipline among lecturers highlights a crucial institutional weakness that requires immediate attention. The inadequacy of current frameworks to curb sexual harassment implies a pressing need for a thorough review and revision of institutional policies. This includes the implementation of robust mechanisms for reporting, investigating, and addressing cases of sexual misconduct among academic staff, accompanied by stringent consequences for violations.

Furthermore, the identified pattern of intimidation tactics raises significant ethical and professional concerns. The exploitation of authority by male lecturers perpetuates a climate of fear and coercion, contributing to the continuation of 'sexualised grade.' Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach involving the establishment of clear guidelines on appropriate behaviour, mandatory training for lecturers on ethical conduct, and the establishment of confidential reporting mechanisms to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

From the foregoing, the prevalence of 'sex for grade' within academic institutions is a multifaceted issue that reveals a complex interplay of power dynamics and individual motivations. On one hand, there is a disturbing abuse of authority by certain lecturers who exploit their positions by demanding sexual favours from students. This misuse of power often involves intimidation and coercion, creating an environment where students may feel compelled to engage in compromising situations to secure academic success.

Conversely, the issue is further complicated by the active participation of students who, despite not facing explicit coercion or intimidation, willingly choose to indulge in 'sex for grade.' This willingness is often observed among academically lazy students who harbour a strong desire for good grades. In such cases, the motivation appears to stem from the students' intrinsic desire for academic success rather than external pressure.

This dual perspective highlights the diverse factors at play within the broader context of 'sex for grade.' On one side, there is a breach of trust and an abuse of authority by certain lecturers, creating an exploitative environment. On the other side, there are students who, driven by a combination of academic laziness and a desire for better grades, actively engage in compromising situations. The issue, therefore, transcends a simple power imbalance and extends into the realm of individual agency and personal choices.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The intersection of sex and academic achievement has evolved into a global discourse, and the pervasive issue of sex for grades demands a more nuanced exploration of its inherent dynamics. This research illuminates the various facets of sex for grades, its prevalence, and its associations with contributing factors at the Federal University Wukari, Nigeria. Beyond peer pressure and academic laziness, the study identified a spectrum of factors influencing sex for grades. These encompass indecent dressing among female students, fear of failure propagated by peers, friends, and family members, the intense pursuit of certificates at any cost, and the exploitation and intimidation tactics employed by lecturers due to their privileged positions. The multifaceted nature of these influences highlights the complexity of the issue and the need for a comprehensive approach to address them.

Despite a universal awareness of the act, the study revealed that the practice of sex for grades continues without due consideration of its implications, both for the students and the lecturers involved. This calls attention to the urgent need for intervention strategies that go beyond mere awareness and address the root causes and consequences associated with such unethical relationships.

In light of the study's findings, government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the university authorities must collaborate to implement effective channels of communication and enlightenment campaigns. These campaigns should comprehensively educate both lecturers and students about the stages, dangers, and implications of amorous relationships within the academic setting. Practical measures, such as workshops, in-house seminars, and collaborations with expert agencies and professional bodies, should be initiated to equip staff and students with the socio-psychological tools necessary to navigate and resist the temptations associated with sex for grades.

Moreover, these enlightenment initiatives should strategically shift the emphasis from a mere pursuit of paper certificates to fostering a genuine reading culture among undergraduates. Aligning with the perspective of Saliman and Muhammed (2021), a holistic engagement with ethical issues, encompassing various facets of interaction and commitment within the institutional framework, is essential to ensure strict compliance and holistic discipline. By addressing these recommendations, stakeholders can work towards cultivating an environment that prioritizes ethical conduct, integrity, and a genuine pursuit of knowledge within the academic sphere.

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