

**RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG  
IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN IBADAN NORTH-WEST  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, IBADAN**

**BY**

**Temitope Oluwaseyi AKINYEMIJU  
B.Sc PUBLIC HEALTH (ADELEKE UNIVERSITY)  
MATRIC. NO.: 211833**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROMOTION  
AND EDUCATION, FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**(HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION)  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

**FEBRUARY, 2021**

## CERTIFICATION

I certify that this study was carried out by AKINYEMIJU TEMITOPE OLUWASEYI under my supervision in the Department of Health Promotion and Education, Faculty of Public Health, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

---

**SUPERVISOR**

**OYEDUNNI S. ARULOGUN**

B.Ed, M.Ed, MPH, Ph.D. (Ibadan), Dip HIV Management and Care (Israel),  
FRSPH (UK), CCST (Nigeria)

Professor

Department of Health Promotion and Education,  
Faculty of Public Health, College of Medicine,  
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my helper and my father, God almighty who has given His precious Spirit to be with me. He has ordered my steps in life till this day and is the reason for the success of this project work.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give all the glory to God Almighty for giving me the grace to successfully start and complete my MPH programme without any regrets.

My sincere and profound gratitude goes to my supervisor, Prof. Oyedunni S. Arulogun for your relentless effort, valuable advice and intensive guidance and for taking time to ensure that I get the best out of my research. I also appreciate you for always making yourself available despite your tedious schedule. May God reward you abundantly.

Special appreciation goes to all the lecturers in the department; Prof. O. Oladepo, Prof. A.J. Ajuwon, Dr. O.E Oyewole, Dr. F.O. Oshiname (late), Dr. M.A. Titiloye, Dr. Yetunde John-Akinola, Dr. O.I Dipeolu, Dr. Moji M. Oluwasanu and Dr. Adeyimika T. Desmenu. I am grateful for the knowledge you have transferred to me.

I would like to acknowledge my parents Col. (Rtd) and Mrs S. Akinyemiju for their financial and moral support. I also appreciate my brother OluwatosinAkinyemiju for his relentless support morally and financially.

Furthermore, I would like to appreciate the entire respondents that participated in this study. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. And to all my friends and colleagues who have been very supportive through the course of my MPH programme, I say thank you!

Finally, my appreciation goes to all those who have contributed in one way or the other to make this project a reality. May God Almighty bless you all (Amen).

## ABSTRACT

Romantic relationship is regarded as a deliberate mutual relationship where both members of a dyad agree to date. Relationship termination can influence virtually every aspect of a person's life including emotional, psychological, social, sexual, financial, physical and spiritual life. There is dearth of literature on coping mechanisms in dealing with relationship breakups. Therefore, this study assessed the coping mechanisms adopted by in-school adolescents in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan during relationship breakup.

A cross-sectional design using a three stage sampling technique was used for this study. A total sample size consisting of 420 in-school adolescents were selected from 12 schools and proportional sampling was used to determine the percentage of students that were picked from each class. Knowledge was measured on a 15-point scale; scores  $\geq$  8 were categorized as good. Perception was measured on a 16-point scale; scores  $\geq$  8 were categorized as positive. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The level of significance was set at  $P \leq 0.05$ .

The mean age of respondents was  $14.70 \pm 1.90$  years and 56.4% were females. Over half (77.9%) of the respondents had good knowledge of relationship and relationship breakup. Less than one third of the respondents (37.1%) have ever been involved in a relationship while 27.4% were currently in a relationship. About 23% of the respondents have experienced break up in a relationship, while 8.6% of the respondents were currently going through a relationship breakup. Sixty two percent of the respondents had negative perception about relationship breakup, while 55.2% of the respondents had good perceived coping mechanism and 47.4% of the respondents had poor coping mechanism. Sixteen percent of respondents admitted that they criticize themselves when going through a breakup, while 12.2% of the respondents admitted that they have been blaming themselves for the breakup. About 16% of the respondents admitted that they use alcohol to make themselves feel better, while about 12.2% of the respondents revealed that they use other drugs to help them get through a breakup, however, while exploring the perceived coping mechanisms of the respondents, over half (63.6%) of the respondents stated that they will never use drugs or substances to make themselves feel better about a breakup. This study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between the age of respondents and their involvement in romantic

relationships which further explains that the age of the students affects their relationship status; the older they are, the more they are involved in romantic relationships.

Findings from this study showed that despite the fact that the students were able to suggest positive perceived coping mechanisms, they are unable to apply what they know. Hence, counseling units focusing on mental health challenges including adolescent relationships and lifestyle should be instituted in the health system of secondary schools. Although the respondents have good knowledge about relationship and relationship breakup, education about relationship management should be encouraged to effect positive changes to the perception the students have towards relationship breakup.

**Keywords:** Relationship, breakup, coping mechanism, in-school adolescents.

**Word count:** 494

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Title	
page.....	i
on.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	xi
Appendices.....	xii
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.....	xiii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	3
1.3 Justification.....	4
1.4 Research questions.....	4
1.5 Study objectives.....	5
1.5.1 Broad objective.....	5
1.5.2 Specific objectives of the study.....	5
1.6 Research hypotheses.....	5
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1 The Construct/Concept of Romantic Relationship.....	6
2.1.2 Romantic Relationship Breakup.....	8
Depression.....	9
Feelings of rejection.....	10
Betrayal.....	10
Heartbreak (Broken Heart Syndrome).....	11
Compromised Immune Function.....	11
Rejected and Romantic Love Have Similar Biochemical and Physiological Profiles.....	12
2.2 Prevalence of Romantic Breakup among Adolescents.....	13

2.3	Perception of adolescents about relationship breakup .....	14
2.4	Factors that contribute to or influence breakups among adolescents.....	14
2.5	Effects of Breakups among Adolescents.....	15
	Negative Outcomes.....	15
	Summary of Negative Outcomes.....	16
	Positive Outcomes .....	17
2.6	Coping strategies developed by adolescents in dealing with romantic relationship breakup	18
2.7	Theoretical Frame work .....	20
	Key concepts.....	20
	Reciprocal Determinism: .....	20
	Environment: .....	20
	Observational Learning: .....	20
	Expectations: .....	20
	Self-Efficacy:.....	20

### **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

3.1	Study design.....	22
3.2	Study area.....	22
3.3	Study site.....	22
3.4	Study population .....	23
3.4.1	Target population.....	23
3.4.2	Inclusion criteria .....	23
3.4.3	Exclusion criteria .....	23
3.5	Determination of sample size.....	23
3.6	Sampling technique.....	24
3.7	Study instrument.....	24
3.7.1	Validity of the research instrument .....	25
3.7.2	Reliability of the instrument .....	25
3.8	Data Collection Procedure.....	25
3.8.1	Analysis of data .....	26
3.9	Ethical Considerations .....	27
3.9.1	Informed consent .....	27
3.9.2	Confidentiality .....	27
3.9.4	Right of decline/Withdrawal from study without loss of benefits.....	27
3.9.5	Risk to participants .....	27
3.10	Study Limitation .....	27



## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.1	Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents .....	28
4.2	Knowledge of Respondents about Relationship and Relationship Breakups .....	30
4.3	Prevalence of Relationship Breakup .....	32
4.4	Perception of In-School Adolescents about Relationship Breakup .....	33
4.5	Perceived Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents in Dealing with Romantic Breakup 36	
4.6	Actual Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents in Dealing with Romantic Breakup	39
4.7	TEST OF HYPOTHESES .....	42
	Hypothesis 1 .....	42
	Hypothesis 2 .....	43
	Hypothesis 3 .....	44

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0	Discussion .....	45
5.1	Socio-Demographic Characteristics .....	45
5.1.2	Knowledge of Respondents about Relationship and Relationship Breakup .....	45
5.1.3	Prevalence of Relationship Breakup .....	46
5.1.4	Perceptions of In-School Adolescents towards Relationship Breakup .....	46
5.1.5	Perceived Coping Strategies to be Checked Through By Students in Dealing with Romantic Breakup .....	48
5.1.6	Actual Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents who had experienced Romantic Breakup .....	49
5.2	Conclusion .....	50
5.3	Recommendations .....	51
5.4	Implication of findings for Health Promotion and Education .....	52
	<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>65</b>
	<b>Ethical Approval .....</b>	<b>70</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

- Table 4.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents
- Table 4.2: Knowledge of respondents on relationship and relationship breakup
- Table 4.3a: Perceptions of in-school adolescents towards relationship breakup
- Table 4.3b: Perceptions of in-school adolescents towards relationship breakup
- Table 4.4: Perceived coping strategies developed by affected respondents in dealing with romantic breakup
- Table 4.5: Reported coping strategies by students who had experienced romantic breakup
- Table 4.6: Test of significant association between the age of respondents and relationship breakup
- Table 4.7: Test of significant association between the age of respondents and relationship status.
- Table 4.8: Test of significant association between the sex of respondents and relationship breakup.

## LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 2.1: Social Learning Theory

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Oyo State ethics committee approval

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

For the purpose of this study, relationship and romantic relationship is synonymous with dating. However, the following concepts are defined thus:

1. **Relationship:** Intimate friendship between two individuals, particularly one which comprises sexual feelings.
2. **Breakup:** A breakup is the dissolution of an intimate relationship by other means besides death.
3. **The terms in-school adolescent, adolescent, youngsters and teenagers are used interchangeably in this study:** A young person between ages 10 and 19 who is developing into an adult.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Adolescents become involved in romantic relationships for diverse reasons. In the words of Aristotle, human-beings are “social animals”. This trait leads them to crave intimate relationships where love can be mutually shared. Psychologists called this “the need to belong” (Mae, Bernales and Colonia, 2011). Due to the assurance on the love and care given by the people they are close to, individuals feel secure and are confident that they are needed and acceptable to loved ones on whom they can depend for the gratification of their needs. Love affair may involve bodily contact which causes chemical reactions leading to arousal in couples. Partners can also gain the love and confidence that they long for. This was reiterated by Koob and Bloom in 1982, when they stated that when humans are involved in love affairs, they release series of chemicals inside the brain (i.e oxytocin, vasopressin and endorphins) that facilitate “short-term” delight and desire.

A romantic relationship is a voluntary and mutually beneficial relationship where both members of a dyad agree to date (Jerves, Rober and Enzlin, 2013). Dating behaviour among adolescents will initiate a learning process that lays the foundation for a future adult romantic relationship. Several studies have disclosed that sexual relationship among teenage students is on the rise and is common in most African schools (Akindele-Oscar and Ayodele, 2004). Romantic breakup is considered as a psychologically and emotionally painful event. Relationship breakup with its ensuing stress and heartache is a natural occurrence that only a handful of individuals escape one. Termination of relationships can affect almost all aspects of a person’s existence and wellbeing including: social, emotional, psychological, financial, sexual, physical and spiritual. Various studies about the negative effects of a breakup have reported a direct link to emotional distress (Frazier and Cook, 1993; Simpson, 1987), anger (Weiss, 1976), resentment and loneliness (Sprecher, 1994), adjustment problems and hopelessness (Moller, Fouladi, McCarthy, and Hatch, 2003, as cited in Erin Buck, 2010).

Regardless of the prevalence of breakups and the related obvious negative outcomes, some aspects about the importance of relationship termination are still not well researched. For

example, little is known about the coping strategies developed by young people that experience relationship breakup (Buck, 2006).

At a stage in life, teenagers begin to develop awareness of the opposite sex and of their own sexuality and they turn out to be concerned and involved in relationships due to the strong feeling to be with the opposite sex. Adolescents crave relationships whereby love is given and gotten back without limitation (Alma and Fretzy, 2011).

Boy-girl relationships are expressions of profound passion towards the opposite gender. They have been recommended as one of the features influencing students' academic performance undesirably or desirably. Poor academic performance has also been linked with mental instability among adolescents (Bundi, Eze, Monica and Eric, 2018).

Coping is a vital aspect of relationship termination due to the stress and emotional distress due to disruption in the dating process as it determines the state of mind of the individual over next few weeks, months and sometimes even years after the breakup. Pragmatic evidence suggests that individuals attempt to cope with a romantic breakup in several ways. For example, study carried out by Perilloux and Buss (2008) found that college students use a variety of positive (e.g., discussing the breakup with friends) and negative (e.g., avoiding or threatening the ex-partner) strategies to cope with their breakups. Mearns (1991) as cited in Anna Hawley, 2012 found that the more college students expected they could do something to alleviate the negative moods they felt due to a breakup the less likely they were to feel depressed in the first week after the breakup and to exhibit avoidant coping (e.g., "refused to believe that it happened"). Individuals with higher confidence in their ability to reduce their distress also exhibited more active attempts to cope with their romantic breakup, either through problem-solving cognitions and/or behavioural responses (e.g., "made a plan of action and followed it"). In different study focused on graduate students, those who had already been employing preventative positive coping resources prior to their breakup (i.e., self-directedness, confidence, acceptance, financial freedom, and physical health) appraised the breakup to be significantly more desirable and reported less negative emotions immediately after the event. Positive coping strategies that were enacted to help participants cope with the event (i.e., self-disclosure, tension control strategies, problem-solving, social support, and physical fitness) reduced the subsequent negative emotional response to the breakup over time (McCarthy, Lambert, and Brack, 1997 as cited in Anna Hawley, 2012). These studies highlight that young adults employ a variety of positive and negative

coping strategies after a breakup and these coping strategies can impact post-breakup psychological functioning in conflicting ways.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Breakup in relationships has been linked to a lot of negative physical and psychological consequences such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, deadly or mild physical illnesses, and shortened lifespan (Gottman, 1994; Kiecolt-Glaser and Newton, 2001). It is even worse for those who were “dumped” as these breakups have been linked to low self-esteem and feelings of distress (Sprecher and Fehr, 1998; as cited in Barber, 2011). According to news reported by The Nation in year 2016, a high school student of Gyegeh Memorial College committed suicide- she supposedly drank a substance believed to be poison because her boyfriend who impregnated and abandoned her, had impregnated another girl. This additionally proves that young people suffering from heart breaks and disappointment due to termination of a romantic relationship might turn to self-destructive behaviours, such as substance abuse and suicide.

Romantic dissolutions frequently results to psychological distress (Perilloux, 2008). It has been observed that dating behaviour among Nigerian youths constitute a very high problem in their psycho-social development including health and academic (Akindele-Oscar, 2014; Ayodele, 2014). Students’ dating activity has resulted into several consequences such as higher cases of unplanned pregnancies, poor academic performance, and eventually school dropouts (Mlyakado, 2013). The harmful psychological and non-psychological consequences related to relationship breakup leave individuals emotionally vulnerable and then predispose them to risk of making poor choices or developing behaviours harmful to them. This necessitates the need to examine the coping strategies individuals develop to deal with feelings of hurt after the dissolution of a romantic relationship.

It is generally believed that secondary or high school students suffer very little or no impacts as a result of the dissolution of romantic relationships and also that they do not share significant intimacy in romantic relationships unlike university students. As shown in a study by Shulman and Connolly (2013) that relationships developed in secondary school are normally brief, while those developed at tertiary level lasts longer and are more serious. Regardless of the briefness and diminished closeness of relationships in teenage years, feelings of “love,” beliefs of understanding what “love” means and feelings of misunderstanding and hurt as a result of “love” have been reported among teenagers and young people (Arnett, 2014 et al.). The breakup of romantic relationship among adolescents



is not well examined and understood regardless of the prevalence and related adverse consequences (Connolly and McIsaac, 2009, 2011; Norona, Olmstead, and Welsh, 2017; Shulman and Connolly, 2013).

### **1.3 Justification**

The World Health Organization has found that suicides regularly occur impulsively and in reaction to a moment of crisis, resulting in a breakdown in the ability to deal with life stressors (WHO, 2015). An experience of a recent negative life event (i.e., in the last 6 to 12 months) can be perceived as a precipitating event, a risk factor and a potential trigger for suicide (Heikkinen, Aro, and Lönnqvist, 1992; Liu and Miller, 2014). An experience of a negative life event can be an unexpected change in a person's situation, an actual or threatened loss, or failure at home or at work (Wasserman, 2016). Examples of common negative life events include financial problems, family/relational discord, unemployment, separation and illness (Wasserman, 2016). Individuals have reported to experience increased odds of attempting suicide soon after experiencing a negative life event, driven by the presence of an interpersonal negative life event, specifically those involving a romantic partner (Bagge, Glenn, and Lee, 2013). These studies reveal that serious health and life-threatening complications arise resulting from romantic relationship breakups.

The justification for this study is that in recent time, newspapers have reported several cases of suicide among in-school adolescents in educational institutions in Nigeria, including schools in Southwest states where Ibadan is located. Secondly, there is dearth of literature on studies that investigate the coping mechanism of in-school adolescents in Ibadan when involved in relationship breakup. Hence the need for this study.

### **1.4 Research questions**

This study answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of knowledge of in-school adolescents on the concept of relationship and relationship breakup?
2. What is the prevalence of relationship breakup among in-school adolescents?

3. What are the perceptions of in-school adolescents of Ibadan North-West Local Government towards relationship breakup?
4. What are the perceived coping strategies in dealing with romantic breakup?
5. What are the actual coping strategies developed by students who have experienced romantic breakup?

## **1.5 Study objectives**

### **1.5.1 Broad objective**

The broad objective of the study was to investigate the coping mechanisms usually adopted by in-school adolescents in Ibadan North-West Local Government Area, Ibadan during a relationship breakup.

### **1.5.2 Specific objectives of the study**

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the level of knowledge of in-school adolescents about relationship and relationship breakup.
2. Determine the prevalence of relationship breakup among in-school adolescents of Ibadan North-West Local Government.
3. Determine the perceptions of in-school adolescents of Ibadan Northwest Local Government towards relationship breakup.
4. Identify the perceived coping strategies developed by the affected students in dealing with relationship breakup.
5. Identify the actual coping strategies developed by the students who have experienced romantic breakup.

## **1.6 Research hypotheses**

1. There will be no significant association between the age of respondents and knowledge of romantic relationships.
2. There will be no significant association between the age of respondents and involvement in romantic relationship.
3. There will be no significant association between the sex of respondents and ability to cope during relationship breakup.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 The Construct/Concept of Romantic Relationship

For a long time, relationships have been viewed as a hallmark of adolescence in the West (Collins, Welsh and Furman, 2009). Most adolescents and teenagers experience the feelings of their heart skipping a beat, attachment and development of a special connection shared by two individuals. The kind of relationship where two individuals fall in love with each other is usually referred to as relationships that are romantic. Mostly, relationships that are romantic are equally recognized intentional communications frequently noticeable by show of love and maybe existing erotic activities (Brown et al. 1999, Furman and Collins 2008, Manning et al. 2006). Many adolescents realize that they have started a bond that offers them feelings of self-fulfillment on both physical and emotional ground and provides them an avenue to develop, become wiser, have more sense of control, comprehend the ideas of feelings, attention, trust, admiration and compassion and use them on those they crush on. When adolescents begin sharing such bond, they begin to see prospects as individuals establish and bolster affair forged in their young ages to stage of getting married.

A lot of cards, songs and poems have been composed regarding 'love', and what do youngsters really contemplate regarding the idea of love? To several, it is greater over life, others see it as a way to develop sexually, form recognition for themselves, and for many it is about having a partner 'in their arms' forever. A number of teenagers may meet their 'significant other' at the age of 14, while a small number of them just dream of a romantic affair with a classmate they sit beside. Comprehensively, love, as an idea is way beyond emotions. In essence, love could be a lot about the anatomical transformations in the body than anything we could think are emotional. The anatomical transformations affect our emotional process and we jump into the intoxicated emotions we connect with love. The amazing thing is that all the grievances, resentments, and physical pains may vanish when we are in love. Love, when sustained well, results to emotional attachment. What may be referred to as an obsession or allurements at the inception can indeed develop into an emotional attachment that needs a sense of devotion, certainty, concern, understanding, self-awareness and the other, effective interaction, exchange of views, perceptions, emotions and

deeds. Love could begin as an infatuation about an individual and may lead to the development of a special connection between both individuals that has a lot of emotional position rather than anatomical ones. Love should not be perceived this way. The higher the number of humans and relationships, the higher the probability of the idea of love. In a situation whereby two friends are involved in a romantic relationship, the idea of love may be the other way round where the two experience emotional captivity way before the physical connection and those who enjoy prosperous relationships where they do not see often may not be so infatuated about each other (Varma and Mathur, 2015).

Researchers find it quite intriguing the idea of affair is special as the populace of teenagers in the globe. Studies on the likely effects of adolescent romantic relationships began mostly after year 2,000, as researchers began to understand the main view of youngsters about those they love and the level of their relationship. Coeval investigators have broadened their view from that time. Recently, researchers have shown more interest in figuring out the good and bad consequences of adolescent romantic affairs (Varma and Mathur, 2015).

The knowledge, prevalence, perception of adolescents about romantic relationships and romantic breakups, their possible impacts (negative and positive), and coping mechanisms are discussed in this chapter.

Youngsters begin to experience sexual maturity at younger ages. Females attain sexual maturity between ages 8 and 13 while they attain menarche years after. Boys on the other hand attain sexual maturity later than girls. Their sexual urges are also heightened (Varma and Mathur, 2015).

Romantic involvement has been documented among half of all adolescents by the age of 15 (Carver, Joyner and Udry, 2003). Romantic relationships provide teenagers with delightful opportunities to acquire some positive developmental tasks. Adolescents are gaining more independence from their parents, they now turn to peers, including their romantic partners for support, information and social engagement. But when things go wrong in a teen's relationship, there is a potential to trigger a range of problems. A breakup can be extremely painful. Adolescents may engage in more risky behaviours. We've probably all known adolescents who get "dumped" by their partners, then go to a party, drink heavily and engage in risky sex with someone else. These are also moments when the risk of depression and suicidal behaviours increase (Thao Ha, 2016).

Adults view adolescent relationships with like standards of theirs. Most researches done about relationships have focused only on adults. Adolescent relationships are commonly misunderstood, therefore, stated below are four common premises that might lead to the misinterpretation of adolescent relationships:

***Premise 1:** Most relationships adolescents are involved in do not last for long. Although this is conventional for adolescents because they are not well developed to handle relationship commitments as adults do. Adult relationships are more committed than that of adolescents.* (Thao Ha, 2016).

This particular assumption is not totally incorrect. Although teenage romantic relationships have more tendency to last for shorter time period, during the relationship, there are occurrences of disputes, breakups and makeups. However, various studies carried out with teenagers reveal that adolescents take their relationships quite seriously. A study by Larson, Clore and Wood (2014) revealed that adolescents spend almost all their time thinking about their partners, and those that do not have partners that they are in relationship with spend most of their time thinking about those they have feelings for.

Majority of adolescents actually do not want their relationships to be brief. As adults who are in love experience feelings of attraction and attachment, so do adolescents. Dissolution or termination of relationships is hurtful and disastrous to adolescents and as a result, they often engage in behaviours that pose risks to their wellbeing.

***Assumption 2:** The methods adolescents use to settle disputes in their relationships are essential indicators for relationship status and emotional wellbeing. Also with adults, poor relationship management and dispute resolution skills will no doubt lead to displeasure in the relationship, thereby increasing the likelihood of divorce* (Thao Ha, 2016).

This premise however does not apply to adolescent relationships as study carried out by Thao Ha (2016) showed that the occurrence of disputes and methods of dispute resolution are not predictive of relationship termination in adolescent relationships.

### **2.1.2 Romantic Relationship Breakup**

Romantic relationship breakup, also known as breakup is the dissolution of a romantic relationship between two individuals by means aside from death. Though relationship breakups, heartbreak and breakup distress occur frequently among older people, they have also been documented to occur as early as seventh grade (Low, Dugas, O'Laughlin,

Rodriguez, Contreras and Chaiton, 2012), and are found to be common among adolescents (Davis, Shaver, and Vernon, 2003). When breakup is initiated by one partner, it usually termed “dumping someone”, which is a common slang. Romantic relationship breakup was further explained by Kristen Gillen (2011), who describes relationship breakup as a heart-wrenching loss. Kristen Gillen (2011) further describes breakups as losses that can stir up a lot of other feelings of pain and hurt when people realize that their relationship with the people they love is over. Relationship terminations commonly linked to breakup distress or pain which is frequently connected with depression, feelings of rejection and betrayal, heartbreak symptoms including chest pain and compromised immune function (Field, 2017).

### **Depression**

Pain resulting from relationship breakup has frequently been linked with depression shortly before or during college (Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, Merikangas and Walters, 2005). The increasing rate of depression among students has become a major cause for concern all over the world (Bayram and Bilgel, 2008), ranging from an incidence of 6% in a Chinese study (Guo, Deng, He, Deng, Huang, Huang, et al, 2014) to 17% of students at a New Zealand university having symptoms of depression (Samaranayake, Arroll and Fernand, 2014) and to 48% of students at a U.S. university also symptoms of depression (Brandy, Penckofer, Solari-Twadell and Velsor-Friedrich B, 2015). The most common symptoms stated among the students were insomnia, intrusive thoughts and difficulty focusing. Another university counseling center in the United States of America reported an increase of 131% in yearly visits as well as a 173% increase in total yearly clients (Beiter, Nash, McCrady, Rhoades, Linscomb and Clarahan, 2015). Symptoms of depression are prevalent among students, and they are also linked with substantial problems affecting their academics (Hill, Yaroslavsky, Pettit, 2015; Hysenbegasi, Hass, 2005). Monroe, Rohde, Seeley and Lewinsohn (1999) in a study found that relationship terminations were one of the most frequently reported “worst events” and they were also a major risk factor for depression. Similarly in another study by Mearns, 1991 as cited in Field, 2017, above forty percent of those experiencing relationship breakups became clinically depressed (twelve percent experienced mild to intense depression). Field, Dieg, Pelaez and Delgado (2012) in their study sampled 283 undergraduates and those that showed high depression scores also had high scores on anxiety, intrusive thoughts, and insomnia. Mearns (1991) also found in a study that women normally experience more intense hopelessness and depression following relationship terminations, being even more depressed than men.

### **Feelings of rejection**

Rejection is frequently experienced in the aftermath of breakups. A study at Case Western Reserve University revealed that 95% of the students had rejected somebody who was in love with them while ninety three percent had been rejected by someone they loved (Field, 2017). Rejection following romantic relationships has been reputedly so painful that people report that they are “not only in agony, but incapacitated” (MacDonald and Leary, 2005). Increased blood pressure and elevated stress hormone has been documented in individuals who have been rejected in romantic relationships (i.e. cortisol) (Stroud, Tanofsky-Kraff, Wilfley, Salovey, 2000) and by analgesia or numbing (MacDonald and Leary, 2005). Ironically, the part of the brain that is triggered by rejection is also triggered by love (Eisenberger, Lieberman, Williams, 2003).

### **Betrayal**

Emotions of betrayal are frequently followed by feelings of rejection. The concept of betrayal is defined as “...a sense of being harmed by the intentional actions or omissions of a person who was assumed to be a trusted and loyal friend, relative, partner, colleague or companion. Many betrayals are unexpected events that come as a surprising shock; not infrequently, the betrayal is disbelieved at first. The effects of a betrayal tend to be long-lasting, even permanent, and are well-remembered” (Rachman, 2010). Various signs of betrayal are intrusive images, pain and reflection (Rachman, 2010). Martin, Cromer, Deprince and Freyd (2013) in a study on undergraduates, assessed the heights of betrayal by intimacy of the relationship and students with increased level of betrayal that occurred in intimate relationships presented more depressive symptoms and post-traumatic stress disorder. Betrayal was also measured in study by Goldsmith, Chesney, Heath and Barlow (2013) using 3 scales comprising: 1) The Brief Betrayal Trauma Scale (Goldberg and Freyd, 2006) which defines increased levels of betrayal as happening in intimate relationships and decreased levels in non-intimate relationship; 2) The Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz, Siegel, Holen, Bonanno, Milbrath and Stinson, 1997 as cited in Tiffany Field, 2017) which evaluates symptoms of intrusion, avoidance and hyper arousal; and 3) the Trauma Symptom Checklist (Elliott and Briere, 1992 as cited in Tiffany Field, 2017) which evaluates signs related to depression, anxiety, insomnia, dissociation and sexual difficulties. Martin, Cromer, Deprince and Freyd (2013) in a study found that females experienced increased levels of betrayal as compared to men. Barlow and Cromer, (2006) confirmed this in a study as they found that females, having experienced increased levels of betrayal also experience post-traumatic stress

disorder. These researchers also stated that females also experience betrayal even in childhood, as consistent with findings in other studies (Goldberg and Freyd, 2006). Babcock and Deprince (2013) in a study also established that the extent to which individuals experience betrayals in childhood is directly proportional to the extent to which they experience betrayal in adulthood.

### **Heartbreak (Broken Heart Syndrome)**

Hurting in the chest or heart after termination of a relationship has been labelled “heartbreak or the broken heart syndrome” (Wittstein, Thiemann, Lima, Baughman, Schulman, Gerstenblith, et al, 2005). Cardiomyopathy or “takotsubo cardiomyopathy” are the names that have been given to such type of hurt. Takotsubo is a pot used for fishing in Japan, it has a thin neck and a large base that is used to catch octopus, and the left ventricle of the heart looks like that fishing pot following heartbreak. Heartbreak is usually accompanied by immune and endocrine dysfunction (Gerra, Monti, Panerai, Sacerdote, Anderlini, Avazini, et al, 2003) and severe medical conditions such as cancer, hypertension and heart attacks (Stroebe and Schut, 1999 as cited in Field, 2017). Though breakup distress imitates symptoms of a heart attack, those with broken heart syndrome recuperate quicker. Cardiac contractile irregularities and heart failure have been documented by several researchers following emotional stress (Bounhoure, 2012; Kurisu, Sato, Kawagoe, Masaharu, Yuji, Kenji, et al, 2002).

However, angiograms showed no blocked arteries in heartbreak, unlike real heart attacks. Furthermore, cardiac enzymes typically released from damaged heart muscle during real heart attacks have not been reported (Wittstein, et al, 2005). Although increased heart rate and the release of catecholamines are linked with the symptoms of heartbreak, the relationships are only suggestive. Higher catecholamines may be an epiphenomenon of the stress cardiomyopathy rather than the causative factor. However, the forms of pain including acute, chronic, psychological, and somatic pain have to be distinguished for right diagnosis to be made.

### **Compromised Immune Function**

A study including over 5,000 internet respondents by Davis, Shaver and Vernon, (2003) revealed relationship breakups have been associated with risky physical and emotional pain, overstated attempts to re-form the relationship, anger and ruthless behaviour, drug abuse and alcohol use. Furthermore, higher levels of stress hormones and insomnia and immune functions have been documented (Shear and Shair, 2005). Compromised immune function



may be as a result of the increased heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol and norepinephrine levels also resulting from heartbreak (Uchino, Kiecolt-Glaser and Glaser, 2000). Although, the positive side to this is that these physiological and biochemical reactions may work to increase pro-inflammatory cytokines, and they, in turn, increase antibodies to prevent infection (Black, 2002). However, due to the delay of this response, increased levels of stress hormones and cytokines can impair immune function (Kiecolt-Glaser, McGuire, Robles and Glaser, 2002). For example, pro-inflammatory cytokines (IL-1, IL-2, IL-6 and TNF-alpha) are followed by depression (Leonard, 2006). Reduction in natural killer cells (cells that kill bacterial, viral, and cancer cells) have happened in individuals who experienced loss and had increased anxiety and depression scores and high cortisol (Gerra, et al, 2003). Few of the people that participated in the study had decreased natural killer cells for about six months. Other investigators have documented a larger occurrence of illness (Freyd, Klest and Allard, 2005) and heart disease (Johnson and Grippo, 2006) in people who have experienced loss.

### **Rejected and Romantic Love Have Similar Biochemical and Physiological Profiles**

Neuroscientists have expressed that the brain discharges alike chemicals for both rejected and romantic love including dopamine, norepinephrine, epinephrine and serotonin, which act like amphetamines in stimulating the brain's pleasure focus (Fisher, Aron, and Brown, 2006). As dopamine and norepinephrine levels increase, serotonin levels decrease (Luciana, Collins and Depue, as cited in Field, 2017). Heightened dopamine, norepinephrine and low serotonin levels, have been associated with both heartbreak and romantic love (Fisher, et al, 2006). Other features of heartbreak and romantic love have also been associated with expanded dopamine such as increased vitality, insomnia, loss of appetite, a racing heart, quickened breathing and tension. Elevated norepinephrine has also accompanied excessive vitality, insomnia and loss of appetite (Griffin and Taylor, 1995 as cited in Field, 2017). The reliance and yearnings connected with both romantic love and rejection are symptoms of addiction, and both romantic love and addictions are associated with elevated dopamine (Schultz, Dayan and Montague, 1997; Abbott, 2002; Fisher, Xu, Araon and Brown, 2016). Romantic love has been linked with both expanded levels of dopamine and oxytocin, while obsessions are more often associated with increased dopamine (Zuo, Song, Zhang and Zhang, 2016). The heartbreak experience may be comparable to medication withdrawal, as in withdrawal from dopamine and oxytocin. Reduced serotonin levels have also followed heartbreak and romantic love (Fisher, et al, 2006).

## 2.2 Prevalence of Romantic Breakup among Adolescents

At the stage of adolescence, most teenagers experience a higher interest and involvement in romantic relationships (Collins et al. 2009; Giordano et al. 2006). Beginning in junior and senior secondary school, the establishment of love affair is a way for youngsters to develop a sense of closeness. By age 16, forty to fifty percent of teenagers are involved in love affairs at any given time (Connolly and Johnson, 1996; Connolly and Konarski, 1994; Kuttler and Greca, 2004; Shulman and Scharf, 2000).

Relationship termination has the prospective to be one of the most psychologically painful activities in a persons' life (O'Sullivan and Thompson, 2014; Sbarra, 2006; Jennie Howatt, 2012). Studies have suggested that youngsters are more likely to experience dissolution pain, as they do not live with close ones (Hendy et al., 2013). Although the levels at which people feel pain differ from one person to the other, relationship termination in young adults has proven to be a an influencing feature for the commencement of Depression, and other psychological ailments (Monroe, et al., 1999; Overbeek et al., 2003; Jennie Howatt, 2012). 46% of adolescents who developed Major Depressive Disorder in secondary school had gone through relationship termination previously, related to twenty four percent of youngsters who also had depression and had not gone through relationship termination (Monroe, Rohde, Seeley, and Lewinsohn, 1999). In a study by Field, Diego, Pelaez, Deeds, Delgado (2010), 119 (76%) adolescents had experienced a breakup 3.5 months ago on average after a 3.3 months relationship duration on the average. The students had experienced 2.9 breakups on average, 2.0 of them having been with the same partner.

According to Fetto (2003), adolescents are more active in relationships than older ones. It is practically unavoidable that most young adults will encounter a romantic breakup at some point during adolescence to late twenties (Shulman and Kipnis, 2001). In a study conducted by Connolly and McIsaac (2004) on 223 adolescents within the age of 17 to 19, over half of the populations (77%) were reported to have suffered a romantic breakup. In a study conducted by Shmuel Shulman, IngeSeiffge-Krenke and MiriScharf (2017), 144 adolescents with mean age of 16.57 were monitored for a duration of four years and the level to which the degree of symptoms of depression forecasts the severity of breakup distress during emerging adulthood was examined. The discoveries recommend that elevated levels of depressive symptoms during adolescence can lead to more struggle in recovering from breakup in early emerging adulthood. Students are often involved in love affairs and these affairs do not last a long time (Stanley, Rhoades and Fincham, 2011), thereby many adolescents are left in

distress following the separation. Weichold and Barber (2008) proposed that despite the fact that romantic relationships play a major role in the development of adolescents; most romantic relationship adolescents are involved in lasts only for 6 months to 1 year. Relationship terminations are the main cause of depression among adolescents (Furman, 2002).

### **2.3 Perception of adolescents about relationship breakup**

In the adolescence stage, teenagers become interested and involved in romantic relationships because of the aspiration to belong with others. Adolescents long to have intimate and passionate relationships whereby love is given and received without restriction (Bernales and Colonia, 2011).

Romantic relationships were proposed as common factors poorly affecting grades of students. Poor school grades have been linked with consequences of affairs within adolescents (Marete, Chiamaka, Gitonga, and Mwenda, 2018).

### **2.4 Factors that contribute to or influence breakups among adolescents**

Only few studies have been carried out to examine the reasons for romantic breakups. In a study, the principal reason for dissolution among students was imbalanced involvement in the relationship (Hill, Rubin and Peplau, 1976, as cited in Field, Diego, Pelaez, Deeds, Jeannette Delgado, 2010). Although, it has been argued that the reasons for breakup may be the loss of important qualities of the relationship, Collins (2003) proposed that romantic relationships offer a context for the growth of intimacy, affiliation, sexuality and autonomy. Relationship terminations are also related to these factors (Connelly and McIsaac, 2009).

According to Connelly and McIsaac (2009), the start point of an intimate relationship in adolescence is motivated by the mixture of an adolescents urge for sex and a deepened requirement for closeness with people who are not familiar (Shulman and Scharf, 2000). In a study on issues that lead to breakup, secondary school students were asked to offer a written response to the question “What was the deal breaker why your last romantic relationship got ruined?” (Connelly and McIsaac, 2009). The justifications provided by the adolescents as causes that led to the breakups were then evaluated and coded using a categorical-content qualitative analysis method (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zibler, 1998; Field et al, 2010). The researchers suggested that since the responses were brief, they were given a code for the assumed content-categories of closeness, connection, sexuality, distinctiveness and

sovereignty. The association category included reasons for dissolution including no time together, boredom, and loss of interest while the intimacy category including absence of love, distrust/deceit, poor communication and poor treatment. Sexuality items included sexual non-satisfactory and lack of physical desirability. The researchers established that problems with relationship (44%) and intimacy (36%) were mostly prevalent in adolescents' breakup reports than were problems with sexuality (20%). One of the challenges of this study, as was pointed out by its researchers, was that the students were only being asked to give the most important reason for the breakup when in fact the breakup may have occurred for many reasons, some big, some small. At least one other researcher has stated that sexual dissatisfaction, boredom with the relationship and a lack of reciprocated love were important causes of the termination of relationships (Sprecher, 1994; Tiffany Field et al, 2010).

## **2.5 Effects of Breakups among Adolescents**

More often than not, romantic breakups are seen as unrelated to a person's wellbeing or as a rite of passage that everyone should be able to overcome (Martin, 2002).

Two negative outcomes of a breakup are discussed below:

### **Negative Outcomes**

Relationship breakups have been linked with some undesirable psychosocial consequences.

They are subcategorized as:

- Lack of self-concept clarity
- Depression.

#### ***a. Lack of self-concept clarity***

Various researches propose that relationship dissolutions pose consequences to self-concept clarity, meaning that after termination of a relationship, people will find it difficult to understand their personality (Lukacs, 2012). Lewandowski, Aron, Bassis and Kunak, (2006) examined the way the theory of self-expansion relates to the aftermath of a relationship dissolution. The model assumes use of romantic relationships by individuals to bolster theirs and their partner's possessions. In order to ascertain the certainty, the investigators carried out three different researches with 3 diverse categories of students who study psychology and also experienced relationship dissolution in the first half of the year. Questionnaires and prior-termination assessment tools were allocated to every participant, and a pre-termination closeness scale. Every study employed different assessment of self-idea. Respondents of the first study were told to respond to the question which read "How were you affected by the

breakup of your relationship?” Respondents of the second study were told to respond to a different question that read “Who are you today?” while respondents of the third study were asked to assess self-idea with a scale. Increased self-development in the period of the relationship highly corresponded with absence of self-concept clarity following relationship dissolution for the 3 categories of respondents. People usually experience self-concept change after the dissolution of a romantic relationship, self-concept change foretold emotional depression.

### ***b. Depression***

Various studies carried out have revealed increased anxiety levels, stress and depression among in-school teenagers who had romantic experiences compared to those who did not (Starr, Davila, Stroud, Clara, Yoneda, Hershenberg, and Ramsay Miller, 2012). Congruently, Zimmer-Gembeck and Vickers (2007) employed a depression record to diagnose signs of depression between people that recently had terminated relationships. The aim of the study was to establish if romantic relationship termination and relationship contentment were associated with depression for some time and either or not rejection sensitivity and commitment to relationship. One hundred and seventy nine students were the first to partake in the study while the other part of the study commenced later. Report revealed that after six months, 37% of respondents had broken up. There was no recorded gender distinguishing factor found between those who did and did not show signs of depression. Zimmer-Gembeck and Vickers (2007) in a study revealed that students who had experienced more rejection were more likely to report symptoms of depression. Termination of romantic relationships are frequently associated with mental anguish and sometimes even psychological disorders (Hill, Rubin, and Peplau, 1976; Monroe, Rohnde, Seeley, and Lewinsohn, 1999; Sprecher, Felmlee, Metts, Fehr, and Vanni, 1998; Tashiro and Frazier, 2003; David M. Buss, 2008).

### **Summary of Negative Outcomes**

Luckas (2012) stated that the undesirable results connected with relationship dissolutions include pain, more depressed people, and absence of personality clarity. Increased levels of breakup distress were associated with insecure attachment. However, people who felt more secure experienced reduced pain and showed better management methods than those who experienced insecurity (Moller et al, 2002). Study by Field et al. (2009) revealed females felt pain more than men. Depression is a risk factor associated with relationship terminations (Monroe, 1999). Gembeck and Colleagues (2007) in a study showed that people who were quite sensitive to rejection had depression. Gary and colleagues (2006) revealed that

dissolutions are a causative factor for absence of personality realization, specifically if people handled resources of those they are romantically involved with as their own. Absence of personality realization and depressive symptoms after the termination of a relationship was connected (Erica, 2009).

### **Positive Outcomes**

Veronica (2012) in a study revealed that many researchers have claimed that romantic relationship dissolution also yields positive results including progress and self-expansion or reestablishment of an association between previous couples into one as such as intimate friends and this was confirmed in a study by Villella (2010) which revealed that the theory of communal exchange is at the core on reestablishing a relationship that was once romantic into one where the parties involved are become good friends following a dissolution. The idea of the communal exchange model states individuals seek to make the most of the benefits while reducing cost in relationships. The costs of friendship are frequently increased among individuals who had previously been involved in a romantic relationship, which explains the reason persons choose to no longer maintain contact after a dissolution (Schneider and Kenney, 2000).

Villella (2010) in her study, assesses the relationship between some variables including gender, who or what caused the dissolution and existing status of the association between the couple to ascertain if they play any role in satisfaction, adjustment and communication with an ex-partner after the dissolution. Her study also revealed that individuals who initiated dissolution felt higher levels of satisfaction in non-dissolution relationships than the others who did not initiate breakup. Those that did not initiate the breakup felt more feelings of distress and hurt during the period of the breakup however, after some time, both those who initiated the breakup and those who did not experience difficulty adjusting. Females found it harder to adjust immediately after a relationship termination while it took men longer periods to adjust. Sex and dissolution origination had no effect on interaction after dissolution. Nonetheless, individuals no longer presently engaged in a fresh affair interacted with people they previously had affair with more often compared with individuals engaged in a new affair. Individuals not engaged in new affairs had higher degree of starting interactions (Lukacs, 2012). Lannutti and Cameron (2002) in a study also confirm that breakups frequently can be formed into friendships.

## **2.6 Coping strategies developed by adolescents in dealing with romantic relationship breakup**

Coping is employed by people through periods of pressure and stress as a means of adaptation and reducing stress (Richard and Susan, 1984).

Management is usually classified as:

- i. Problem-focused coping
- ii. Feeling-centered coping (Richard and Susan, 1984).

Differences of these classifications of coping were summarized by Billings and Moos (1981):

- i. Problem-focused coping comprises means to change or completely remove the sources of stress through a person's behaviour.
- ii. Feeling-centered management comprises cognitive and behavioural reactions whereof principal use involves handling the outcome of stress factors while also assisting to sustain an individual's stability.

The termination of a romantic relationship is frequently seen as one of life's most distressing events, either the breakup be a non-marital breakup, marital divorce or separation, or bereavement (Kendler, Hettema, Butera, Gardner and Prescott, 2003; Scully, Tosi and Banning, 2000). Breakup has been associated with series of undesirable emotional and physical health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, loneliness, fatal and nonfatal physical illness, and decreased longevity. More specifically, non-marital dissolutions were related with elevated emotions of pain also with reduced confidence, particularly for people "dumped" (Sprecher and Beverley, 1998). Feelings such as these are normally the strongest immediately after the breakup and then dissolve over a period of months (Barber and Cooper, 2011; Sbarra and Emery, 2005). According to study by Barber and Cooper (2011) it was found that due to the negative psychological consequences linked to relationship dissolution, people are thought to be emotionally weak following a breakup, which is presumed to predispose them to risk of making poor decisions or engaging in risky behaviours. For example, a study carried out by Davis, Shaver, and Vernon (2003) revealed that individuals who were "dumped" or more committed to their previous relationship increased alcohol consumption following the breakup as compared to those who were less committed or brought about the relationship termination.

There are diverse ways or methods for coping with tough happenings, there are differences in coping strategies men and women use. Coping mechanisms are used by people in attempts to resolve difficulties or manage their internal or external demands that are challenging to their psychological resources (Bouchard, and Theriault, 2003; Lazarus, and Folkman, 1984).

Men usually use emotional distraction or techniques such as dampening after breakups, engaging in activities such as concentrating more on work or sports to disremember or ignore the hurt as a result of the recent romantic relationship dissolution (Eugene Kanin, Davidson and Scheck, 1970).

Asides emotional distraction and dampening, men use other strategies to cope with hurt such as avoidance or physical recreation (Sandra, Rueger, Malecki and Demaray, 2008). Therefore, men will try to avoid the negative thoughts or emotions that are connected with the breakup by focusing their attention elsewhere.

Recovering from relationship dissolution is a long process with several stages which may include allocating relevant time to heal, improving intrapersonal relationships and finding the motivation necessary to dismiss the breakup itself (Hansen, 2012).

When committed romantic relationships are ended, couples are confronted with difficult challenges of disinterestedness from their former partner, undesirable feelings about the entire situation, and the need to move on with life. When confronted with this situation, some people use and find relief in superficial or noncommittal rebound relationships, which also serves as a means for coping with the loss of the prior relationship and the detached emotional attachment to a former partner (Shimek and Bello, 2014). Study carried out by Perilloux and Buss (2008) revealed that college students use a range of positive (e.g., discussing the breakup with friends) and negative (e.g., avoiding or threatening the ex-partner) strategies to cope with their breakups. This expresses that young adults employ a variety of positive and negative coping strategies after a breakup and that impacts breakup recovery in conflicting ways.



## 2.7 Theoretical Frame work

### Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1963)

The conceptual framework that was used for this study was the Social Learning Theory (SLT). Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory was developed in year 1963 and it posits that individuals learn from each other by noticing, mimicking and displaying. The theory describes an ongoing, dynamic process in which factors such as personal factors, environmental factors, and human behaviour influence each other. It also highlights the essence of noticing and displaying the performances, approaches and feelings of people.

The main aim of the social learning theory is to demonstrate that people are capable of learning in various means. Although individuals make choices based on self-reflection, more specifically, the environment where individuals find themselves influences the way they learn and behave.

#### Key concepts

People learn through observing others' behaviour, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviours (Bandura, 1977).

**Reciprocal Determinism:** The vibrant communication of the individual, behaviour and the setting in which the behaviour is executed.

**Environment:** Features that are physically external to the individual, and include prospects for social support.

**Observational Learning:** Behavioural acquirement that happens by observing the actions and result of conduct of others within the environment.

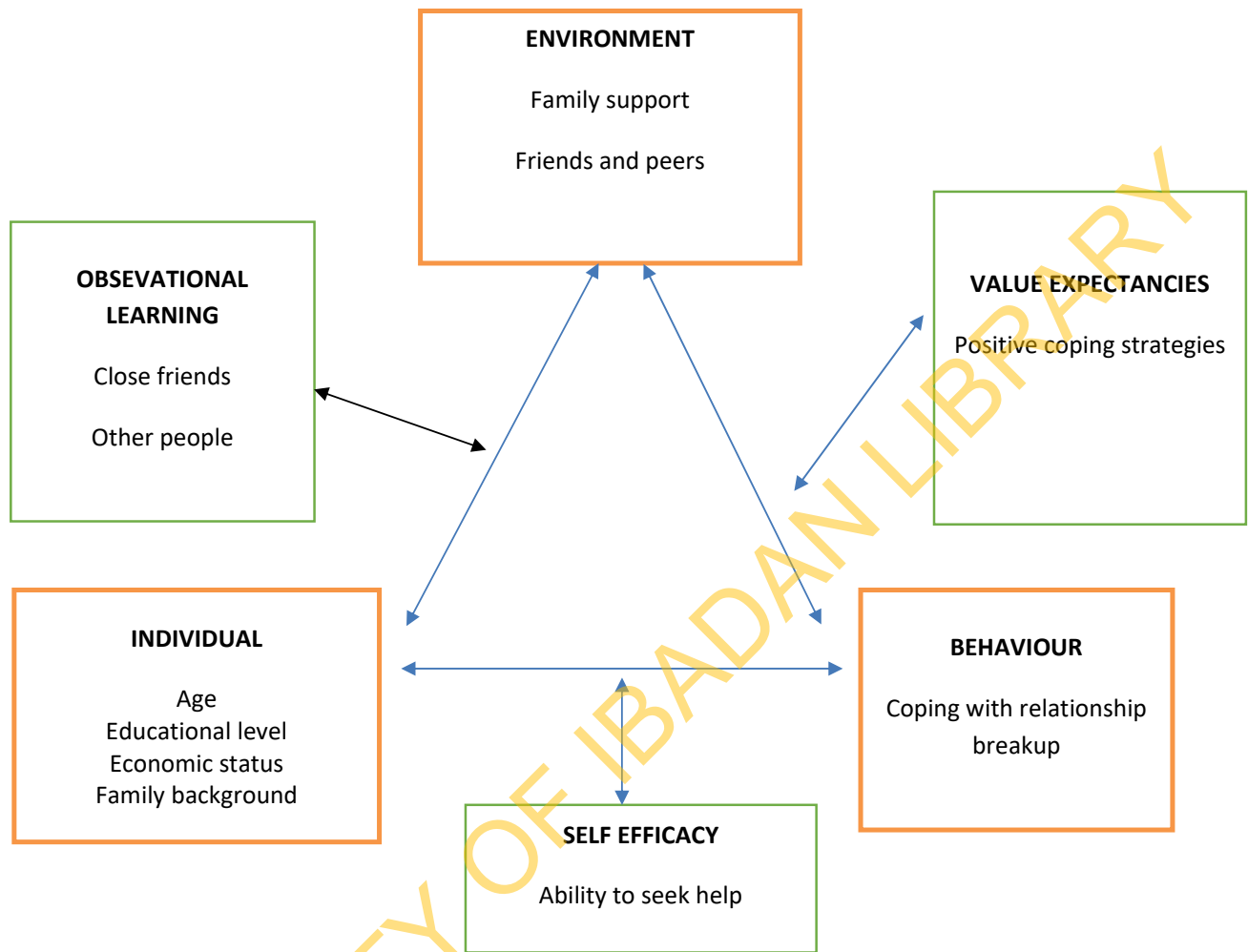
**Expectations:** Anticipatory outcomes of behaviour.

**Self-Efficacy:** An individual's self-reliance towards exhibiting a precise action.

Environment context – Social, Economic, Geographical

The Individual – Personal and Cognitive characteristics

The Behaviour – Nature and dimensions



**Figure 2.1: Social Learning Theory as applied to the study**

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Study design

A cross-sectional study design was used for this study to investigate the knowledge, prevalence, perception, perceived and actual coping mechanisms developed by in-school adolescents in dealing with relationship breakups in Ibadan North-West Local Government Area, Ibadan. Cross-sectional study design was used for this study because the study allows the researcher obtain data from different individuals at a single point in time.

#### 3.2 Study area

The area selected for this study was Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area. Ibadan Northwest Local Government was established in 1991 by the previous Military head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida (rtd). According to the NPC (2006), the Local Government consists of vast areas of land with a total of about 152,834 people. The local government is divided into 11 wards with its administrative headquarter at Onireke.

Ibadan North West Local Government Area is bordered in the North by Ido Local Government, in the West by Ibadan South West Local Government, in the East by Ibadan North East and in the South by Ibadan South East Local Government. Its inhabitants consist of Yoruba, Hausa, Ibo and Other tribes who engage in several occupations such as trading, farming, artisanship and civil service.

Within the local government there are about 18 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, 3 higher institutions, 5 industries, 8 primary healthcare centers that provide several medical services. There are 16 private hospitals within the council area (Oyo State Government, 2019).

#### 3.3 Study site

The study sites were selected from Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area through simple random sampling. Public and Private high schools were selected from the list of schools within the local government that were obtained from the local government offices.

### 3.4 Study population

The study population consists of in-school adolescents attending secondary schools in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan.

#### 3.4.1 Target population

The respondents of the survey were adolescents aged 10 – 19 years attending secondary schools within Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo state.

#### 3.4.2 Inclusion criteria

For the purpose of this study, participants eligible for this study were adolescents aged 10-19 attending secondary schools in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo state. All adolescents within this age bracket were considered for the study regardless of their class.

#### 3.4.3 Exclusion criteria

Adolescents in higher institutions of learning and those eligible but not willing to participate were excluded from the study. Also, individuals that did not fall within the age bracket (10-19) of adolescents were excluded from the study.

### 3.5 Determination of sample size

The Leslie Kish's formula was used to calculate the sample size for this study.

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times (P \times 1 - P)}{d^2}$$

$$N = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

N= Minimum sample size

Z= Standard normal deviation set at 1.96 normal interval

p= Proportion estimated to be obtained in the target population {prevalence of romantic breakup among adolescents in a senior high school is 46% (Monroe et al, 1999).

q= Proportions that does not have the characteristics being investigated

$$(q=1-p) \quad q= 1 - 0.46= 0.54$$

d= Degree of accuracy set at 0.05 (precision set at 5% significant)

$$\text{Therefore, the sample size } N = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.46 \times 0.54}{0.05^2}$$

$$N = \frac{0.954}{0.0025}$$

N= 382

A non-response rate of 10% of 382 = 38

Therefore, 38 were added to the sample size calculated to make the sample size 420 in order to address issues of incomplete response.

### **3.6 Sampling technique**

A sample size of 420, drawn from junior and senior secondary schools in the local government area was proposed for the study.

Selection of in-school adolescents consisted of a three-stage sampling technique involving:

#### **Stage 1**

- Six wards within Ibadan northwest local government were selected using simple random method.

#### **Stage 2**

- Identification and selection of 2 schools each within the selected six wards within Ibadan northwest local government area using simple random sampling technique (balloting).

#### **Stage 3**

- Proportionate sampling method was used to determine the percentage of students that were selected from each class across all class divisions and ranking to ensure equality of selected students. Allocation (based on the sample size and the number of students in the junior and senior secondary school class) was applied in the selection of number of study participants in each of the selected schools and respondents for the study were drawn from each class using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques).

### **3.7 Study instrument**

The Data for this study was collected using a quantitative research instrument.

#### *Quantitative method*

The questionnaire which was semi-structured and self-administered was divided into six sections as follows: Section A (Socio-Demographic Characteristics), followed by Section B (Level of knowledge of in-school adolescents about relationship breakup), Section C (Prevalence of relationship breakup among in-school adolescents of Ibadan North West Local Government), Section D (Perceptions of senior in-school adolescents of Ibadan North West

Local Government towards relationship), Section E (Perceived coping strategies developed by the affected students in dealing with relationship breakup) and Section F (Actual coping strategies developed by the affected students in dealing with relationship breakup).

The Brief COPE scale has 28 items that were used to document the coping mechanisms adopted by adolescents in dealing with relationship breakups. The items were categorized into 14 coping strategies as follows: active coping, planning, positive reframing, acceptance, humor, religion, using emotional support, instrumental support, self-distraction, denial, venting, substance use, behavioural disengagement and self-blame. The major coping categories are problem-focused, emotion-focused and avoidance. As this was self-administered, the items were rephrased into questions.

### **3.7.1 Validity of the research instrument**

In a view to establish the validity of the instruments, relevant literatures were reviewed to acquire knowledge and ideas needed to develop the questionnaire. The supervisor was also consulted for advice. The instrument was pretested among respondents with similar characteristics at Ibadan North local government area to establish its validity. The filled questionnaires were coded and entered using SPSS version 25, after which a Cronbach Alpha measurement and reliability co-efficient measure was carried out to examine how reliable the instrument is.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of the instrument**

In establishing the reliability of the instrument, the researcher applied the Pre-test technique. The Pre-test technique is a process whereby the researcher administered the constructed questionnaire to 10% of the total study population in another representative population but the completed questionnaire was not used in the final analysis of the research work. A Cronbach Alpha measurement and reliability co-efficient measure was carried out on the pre-test questionnaire to examine how reliable the instrument is. A co-efficient of 0.93 was obtained.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

Five (5) research assistants who were all university graduates and had experience on research, especially data collection were recruited and trained by the researcher on the objectives of the study and also the instrument for data collection. The researcher explained the ethical issues relating to the study to the research assistants.

The researcher and the research assistants collected the data across the secondary public and private schools over a period of 4 weeks. Data collection took place during their break periods and free periods in their classes and libraries. The benefits and the possible challenges that may arise during the course of the study were explained to the research participants. The researcher and research assistants also put the students through on how to fill the questionnaires. The questionnaires were tagged with identification numbers to ensure accountability. The completed copies of the questionnaire were all checked for completeness and then collated.

### **3.8.1 Analysis of data**

Serial numbers were boldly written on the copies of the questionnaire to foster easy entry and recall. A coding guide was constructed along with the data collection tool in order to facilitate the data analysis. Copies of the questionnaires were reviewed to ensure consistency and completeness. Cleaning, recording and coding of data for analysis were also carried out. Using the coding guide, the data collected were carefully entered into the statistical software and analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as Chi-square. The results obtained from the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25, were summarized and presented in tables and charts.

The assessment of knowledge, perception, perceived coping mechanism and actual coping mechanism were done by scoring and are outlined as follows:

- Knowledge questions were measured on 15 point scale and were classified as:  $\leq 8$  (Poor knowledge) and  $> 8$  (Good knowledge).
- Perception questions were measured on 16 points scale and were classified as  $\leq 8$  (Negative perception) and  $> 8$  (Positive perception).
- An 8 item tool was used to document the perceived coping mechanism adopted by adolescents in dealing with breakup and this was measured based on the coping scales ranging from options 1-4. It was rated on a 24 point scale and were classified as  $\leq 12$  as poor and  $> 12$  as good coping mechanism.
- The 28 items Brief COPE tool was used to document the actual coping mechanisms adopted by adolescents in dealing with breakup and this was measured based on the coping scales ranging from options 1-4. It was rated on an 84 point scale and were classified as  $\leq 42$  as poor and  $> 42$  as good coping mechanism.

- Hence, the results obtained from the analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 were summarized and presented in prose, tables and charts.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was sought and obtained from the Oyo State Ethics Review Committee before going to the field for data collection.

#### **3.9.1 Informed consent**

Written informed consent were obtained from the principals of each school used and each participant involved in the study after explaining the purpose of the study to them. Consent was sought from the students before being approached for the interview.

#### **3.9.2 Confidentiality**

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, no names were recorded on the questionnaire; however codes by which selected schools can be traced were generated for the purpose of re-visiting. Study instruments were kept in a safe place and were only accessible to members of the research team.

#### **3.9.4 Right of decline/Withdrawal from study without loss of benefits**

Participants had the right to decline or withdraw from the study at any time. They were also assured that refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study would not attract any penalty.

#### **3.9.5 Risk to participants**

The participants involved in this study were not at risk as a result of this study. There was no risk associated with this study.

### **3.10 Study Limitation**

A limitation for this study was that the respondents felt uneasy to give full details about their romantic relationships because their teachers were mostly around to ensure cooperation. However, efforts were made to reduce these challenges by excusing the teachers from the classrooms and libraries and also ensuring the respondents of confidentiality of all information provided.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

This chapter presents and interprets the analysis of the research questions of the study titled: Relationship Breakup and Coping Mechanisms among In-school Adolescents in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo state.

#### 4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The age of respondents ranged from 9 to 21 years with 258 (61.4%) between the 9 – 15 years age group, while 162 (38.6%) of the respondents were between the 16 – 21 years of age group. Mean age was  $14.70 \pm 1.90$  years. Two hundred and thirty seven (56.4%) respondents were females while one hundred and eighty three (43.6%) respondents were males. Majority of the respondents 367 (87.4%) were Yoruba, 18 (4.3%) were Hausa and 32 (7.6%) were Ibo. A large number of respondents 302 (71.9%) were Christians while 116 (27.6%) were Muslims (Table 4.1).

**TABLE 4.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Variable	Frequency (n = 420)	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	183	43.6
Female	237	56.4
<b>Age* (in years)</b>		
9-15	258	61.4
16- 21	162	38.6
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Yoruba	367	87.4
Hausa	18	4.3
Ibo	32	7.6
Others <sup>†</sup>	3	0.6
<b>Religion</b>		
Christian	302	71.9
Islam	116	27.6
Traditional	2	0.5
<b>Class</b>		
JSS1	2	0.5
JSS2	36	8.6
JSS3	48	11.4
SSS1	41	9.8
SSS2	51	12.1
SSS3	242	57.6

\* *Mean age = 14.7 ± 1.9*

\*\**Others include Ijaw (0.2%), Igala (0.2%) and Ivory Coast (0.2%).*

#### **4.2 Knowledge of Respondents about Relationship and Relationship Breakups**

Majority of the respondents 293 (69.8%) believed that relationships involve physical or emotional intimacy while one hundred and one (24.0%) respondents believed relationships do not involve physical or emotional intimacy. Two hundred and forty (57.1%) respondents agreed that voluntary mutual relationship is when two individuals agree to date while one hundred and forty (33.3%) respondents did not agree that voluntary mutual relationship is when two individuals agree to date. Three hundred and four respondents (72.4%) agreed that a relationship entails the cooperation of people to achieve a set goal. When asked what a relationship is, 311 (74.0%) respondents agreed that a relationship is where two people decide to be friends.

When respondents were asked about the implications of a relationship breakup, 363 (86.4%) respondents believed that it can lead to depression, while three hundred and sixteen (75.2%) respondents believed that relationship breakup is associated with negative psychological outcome such as distress. Majority of the respondents 302 (71.9%) also believed that breakup tend to make a person develop self-destructive behaviours. Many respondents 329 (78.3%) believed that relationship breakup can make them lose focus in their academic pursuit, over half of the respondents 309 (73.6%) also believed that relationship breakup can make them lose interest in doing things they loves. Seventy four respondents (17.6%) believed that relationship breakups do not have disadvantages while three hundred and thirty (78.6%) believed that relationship breakups have disadvantages.

When asked about ways to deal with conflicts in a relationship, many respondents 387(92.1%) agreed that conflicts in a relationship are solved when both parties talk about the conflict and find a peaceful solution. Sixty six (15.7%) respondents agreed that the way to deal with conflict is to ignore their partner until their partner decides to break up, while three hundred and forty (81.0%) respondents believed that ignoring their partner till they decide to break up is not the best way to deal with conflicts.

In addition, 344 (81.9%) respondents agreed that to resolve conflict in a relationship, the partners should seek advice from older people on how to manage conflicts. Over half of the respondents (77.9%) had good knowledge about relationship and relationship breakups with knowledge score of  $10.45 \pm 2.46$ , while 22.1% of the respondents had low knowledge about relationship and relationship breakups. Results can be viewed in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2.

**TABLE 4.2: Knowledge of the Respondents about Relationship and Relationship Breakup**

Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Response (%)
<b>Relationship is?</b>			
Intimate interpersonal relationship that involves physical or emotional intimacy	293 (69.8)	101 (24.0)	26 (6.2)
Voluntary mutual relationship where two individuals agree they date	240 (57.1)	140 (33.3)	40 (9.5)
Cooperation of people to achieve a set goal	304 (72.4)	71 (16.9)	45 (10.7)
Relationship where two people decide to be friends	311 (74.0)	68 (16.2)	41 (9.8)
<b>Disadvantages of relationship breakup are</b>			
It leads to depression	363 (86.4)	52 (12.4)	5 (1.2)
It is associated with negative psychological outcome such as distress	316 (75.2)	92 (21.9)	12 (2.9)
It can make you to develop self-destructive behaviours	302 (71.9)	104 (24.8)	14 (3.3)
It can make you to lose focus in your academics	329 (78.3)	82 (19.5)	9 (2.1)
It can make you lose interest in doing things you love	309 (73.6)	99 (23.6)	12 (2.9)
It does not have any disadvantage	74 (17.6)	330 (78.6)	16 (3.8)
<b>Ways to deal with conflicts in a relationship are</b>			
Talk about the conflict and find peaceful solution(s)	387 (92.1)	20 (4.8)	13 (3.1)
Ignore your partner until you or your partner decides to breakup	66 (15.7)	340 (81.0)	14 (3.3)
Find a way to hurt your partner back if you have been hurt	69 (16.4)	333 (79.3)	18 (4.3)
Seek advice from older people on how to manage conflicts	344 (81.9)	62 (14.8)	14 (3.3)
Apologize even though you are not at fault	365 (86.9)	43 (10.2)	12 (2.9)

*Mean knowledge score = 10.45 ± 2.46*

### 4.3

### Prevalence of Relationship Breakup

Less than one third of the respondents (37.1%) have ever been involved in a relationship while 27.4% are currently in a relationship. Respondents' experience of break up in a relationship was found at 22.9% and 8.6% of the respondents are currently going through a relationship breakup (Figure 4.3).

Among the respondents who have experienced breakup, 63.7% have experienced it once while 23.1% have had it twice, other respondents (13.2%) experienced breakup 3 to 10 times. Mean frequency of the experience of breakup among respondents was found at  $1.77 \pm 1.557$ .

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

#### 4.4 Perception of In-School Adolescents about Relationship Breakup

Majority of the respondents 263 (62.6%) agree that relationship breakup prevents them from studying effectively. Fifty nine percent reported that relationship breakup causes them to feel pain. While 212 (50.5%) respondents agreed that relationship breakups that are not handled positively can cause damage to their future relationship patterns.

When asked if relationship breakup can cause respondents to seek rebound relationships, 206 (49%) respondents agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to seek rebound relationships to feel better, while one hundred and seven (25.5%) respondents disagreed that relationship breakups can cause them to seek rebound relationships to feel better.

In addition, when asked if relationship breakup can cause respondents to use drugs/substances to feel better, 112 (26.7%) agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to use drugs/substances to feel better, while two hundred and thirty five (56%) respondents disagreed that relationship breakups can cause them to use drugs/substances to feel better.

About a quarter of respondents (27.4%) agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to use alcohol to feel better. When asked about how respondents would feel if they were rejected in a relationship, 240 (57.1%) respondents felt that they would feel sad if they were rejected in a relationship.

Subsequently, when asked who respondents would prefer to talk to if they were going through a relationship breakup, 182(43.3%) respondents felt they would prefer to talk to their mothers if they were going through a relationship breakup, seventy six (18.1%) respondents felt that they would rather talk to their fathers, 123 (29.3%) respondents felt that they would prefer to talk to their siblings, 218 (51.9%) respondents felt that they would prefer to talk to their friends, eighty-eight (21%) respondents felt they would prefer to talk to their school counselor and 12 (2.9%) respondents felt they would prefer to talk to no one.

Responding to what the respondents would do if their partner breaks their heart, 255 (60.7%) respondents felt they would move on, eighty (19%) respondents felt they would keep begging till they are taken back by their ex-partner, 153 (36.4%) respondents revealed that they do not know what they would do, while seven (1.7%) respondents reported they would let go. Over half of the respondents (62.4%) had negative perception towards relationship breakup with perception score of  $2.85 \pm 2.1$ . Results can be viewed in Table 4.3a and Table 4.3b.

**Table 4.3A: Perceptions of In-School Adolescents towards Relationship Breakup**

<b>Relationship breakup:</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Undecided (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>
Prevents you from studying effectively	263 (62.6)	44 (10.5)	107 (25.5)
Causes you to feel pain?	248 (59.0)	60 (14.3)	104 (24.8)
If not handled positively can cause damage to your future relationship patterns	212 (50.5)	70 (16.7)	116 (27.6)
Can cause you to seek rebound relationships to feel better	206 (49.0)	96 (22.9)	107 (25.5)
Can cause you to use drugs/substances to feel better	112 (26.7)	66 (15.7)	235 (56.0)
Can cause you to use alcohol to feel better	115 (27.4)	64 (15.2)	234 (55.7)

*Mean perception score = 2.90 ± 2.1*

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

**Table 4.3b: Perceptions of in-school adolescents towards relationship breakup**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>No. (%)</b>
<b>How respondents would feel if rejected in a relationship+</b>	
Sad	240 (57.1)
I would not feel differently (Neutral)	148 (35.2)
I don't know how I would feel	146 (34.8)
<b>Who respondents would prefer to talk to while going through a relationship breakup+</b>	
Mom	182 (43.3)
Dad	76 (18.1)
Siblings	123 (29.3)
Friends	218 (51.9)
School counselor	88 (21.0)
Nobody	12 (2.9)
<b>What respondents would do if their partners break their hearts+</b>	
I would take it like it never happened (move on)	255 (60.7)
I would keep begging till I am taken back	80 (19.0)
I don't know what I would do	153 (36.4)
I will let go	7 (1.7)

+ *Multiple choices*



#### **4.5 Perceived Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents in Dealing with Romantic Breakup**

One hundred and twenty two (29%) respondents felt they would likely distract themselves from thinking about breakup by hanging out with friends as a coping strategy, 97 (23.1%) respondents felt that sometimes, they will likely adopt the method of hanging out with friends as a coping mechanism if they experience relationship breakup, thirty one (7.4%) respondents felt that they will likely rarely distract themselves from thinking about breakup by hanging out with friends as a coping strategy, and seventy four (17.6%) respondents reported that they will likely never distract themselves from thinking about breakups by hanging out with friends as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup.

Thirty three (7.9%) respondents felt that they will always talk about their breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup, 52 (12.4%) respondents felt that sometimes, they will always talk about their breakup as a coping strategy, 70 (16.7%) respondents felt that they will likely rarely always talk about their breakups as a coping strategy, while one hundred and sixty six (39.5%) respondents felt that they will likely never talk about their breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup.

When asked if respondents would try not to think about their breakup as a coping strategy, 129 (30.7%) respondents felt that they will try not to think about their breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup, ninety (21.4%) respondents felt that sometimes, they will likely try not to think about their breakup as a coping strategy, 42 (10%) respondents felt that they will likely rarely try not to think about their breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup, while sixty (14.3%) respondents felt that they will likely never try not to think about their breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup.

When asked if respondents would use drugs or substances to make themselves feel better, thirteen (3.1%) respondents felt that they will likely often use drugs or substances to make themselves feel better about their breakup, many of the respondents 267 (63.6%) felt that they will likely never use drugs or substances to make themselves feel better about their breakup as a coping strategy. 37(8.8%) respondents felt that they will likely often blame their ex-partners for the breakup to make themselves feel better.

Subsequently, when asked about remaining friends with their ex-partners after a breakup, 76 (18.1%) respondents revealed that they will likely often remain friends with their partners

after a breakup as a coping strategy in dealing with romantic breakup. One hundred and twenty four (29.5%) respondents felt that they will likely often ignore their feelings after a breakup. Many of the respondents 134 (31.9%) felt that they will likely often pray after a breakup as a coping strategy. A little over half of the respondents (55.17%) had good perceived coping mechanism in dealing with relationship breakup with score of  $13.24 \pm 2.81$ .

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

**Table 4.4: Perceived Coping Strategies to be Developed by Respondents in Dealing with Romantic Breakup**

Statements	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Never (%)
I distract myself from thinking about it by hanging out with friends	122 (29.0)	97 (23.1)	31 (7.4)	74 (17.6)
I always talk about it	33 (7.9)	52 (12.4)	70 (16.7)	166 (39.5)
I try to not think about it	129 (30.7)	90 (21.4)	42 (10.0)	60 (14.3)
I use drugs or substances to make me feel better	13 (3.1)	15 (3.6)	19 (4.5)	267 (63.6)
I blame my ex-partner for the breakup to make me feel better	37 (8.8)	55 (13.1)	42 (10.0)	188 (44.8)
I remain friends with my ex-partner	76 (18.1)	62 (14.8)	56 (13.3)	123 (29.3)
I ignore my feelings intentionally	124 (29.5)	92 (21.9)	47 (11.2)	59 (14.0)
I pray about it to feel better	134 (31.9)	87 (20.7)	48 (11.4)	53 (12.6)

#### **4.6 Actual Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents in Dealing with Romantic Breakup**

Forty (40%) respondents acknowledged they have not been turning to work or other activities to take their mind off things, while 25 (25%) of the respondents reported they have been turning to work or other activities to take their mind off things a lot.

When asked if respondents have been concentrating their efforts on doing something about the breakup, twenty nine (29.3%) respondents acknowledged that they have not been doing that at all. 19 (19.2%) of the respondents admitted to denial when going through breakup, while 16 (16.3%) of the respondents admitted that they use alcohol or other drugs to make themselves feel better a lot when going through a breakup.

Sixteen (16.3%) respondents admitted that they criticize themselves when going through a breakup a lot. When asked if respondents have been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do, 19 (19.4%) respondents admitted that they have been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do. Twelve (12.2%) respondents admitted that they have been blaming themselves for things that happened.

In addition, when respondents were asked if they have been praying or meditating, 25 (25.5%) of the respondents admitted that they have been praying a lot, while 28 (28.6%) respondents reported that they have not been praying or meditating at all. Forty (40.8%) respondents admitted that they have not been trying to find comfort in their religion or spiritual beliefs, and 17 (17.3%) respondents admitted that they have been expressing their negative feelings. Less than half of the respondents (47.39%) had good actual coping mechanism in dealing with relationship breakup with score of  $39.81 \pm 12.82$ .

**Table 4.5: Reported coping strategies by students who had experienced romantic breakup**

<b>Coping mechanisms</b>	<b>I haven't been doing this at all (%)</b>	<b>I have been doing this a little bit (%)</b>	<b>I have been doing this a medium amount (%)</b>	<b>I have been doing this a lot (%)</b>
<b>Active coping</b>				
I take actions to try to make the situation better	35 (35.7)	18 (18.4)	18 (18.4)	23 (23.5)
I turn to work or other activities to take my mind off things	40 (40.0)	23 (23.0)	10 (10.0)	25 (25.0)
I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation	29 (29.3)	34 (34.3)	9 (9.1)	22 (22.2)
I get help and advice from other people	34 (34.7)	19 (19.4)	12 (12.2)	28 (28.6)
I look for something good in what is happening	19 (19.4)	22 (22.4)	24 (24.5)	25 (25.5)
I do something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, shopping	32 (32.7)	20 (20.4)	7 (7.1)	28 (28.6)
I have been learning to live with it	29 (29.6)	21 (21.4)	20 (20.4)	21 (21.4)
I express my negative feelings	35 (35.7)	19 (19.4)	14 (14.3)	17 (17.3)
<b>Denial</b>				
I say to myself 'this is not real'	34 (34.3)	17 (17.2)	24 (24.2)	19 (19.2)
I refuse to believe that it has happened	40 (40.8)	21 (21.4)	18 (18.4)	15 (15.3)
<b>Substance use</b>				
I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better	61 (62.2)	12 (12.2)	5 (5.1)	16 (16.3)
I use alcohol or other drugs to help me get through it	65 (66.3)	7 (7.1)	11 (11.2)	12 (12.2)
<b>Using emotional support</b>				
I get emotional support from others	37 (37.8)	27 (27.6)	18 (18.4)	12 (12.2)
I get comfort and understanding from someone	19 (19.4)	23 (23.5)	22 (22.4)	23 (23.5)
I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do	29 (29.6)	22 (22.4)	18 (18.4)	20 (20.4)

Coping mechanisms	I haven't been doing this at all (%)	I have been doing this a little bit (%)	I have been doing this a medium amount (%)	I have been doing this a lot (%)
<b>Positive reframing</b>				
I say things to let my unpleasant feelings escape	39 (39.8)	15 (15.3)	15 (15.3)	24 (24.5)
I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive	32 (32.7)	24 (24.5)	15 (15.3)	24 (24.5)
<b>Self-blame</b>				
I criticize myself	53 (54.1)	14 (14.3)	12 (12.2)	16 (16.3)
I have been blaming myself for things that happened	44 (44.9)	21 (21.4)	13 (13.1)	12 (12.2)
<b>Planning</b>				
I try to come up with a strategy about what to do	38 (38.8)	22 (22.4)	11 (11.2)	19 (19.4)
I have been thinking hard about what steps to take	33 (33.7)	25 (25.5)	11 (11.2)	18 (18.4)
<b>Behavioral disengagement</b>				
I give up the attempt to cope	37 (38.1)	27 (27.8)	15 (15.5)	10 (10.3)
<b>Humor</b>				
I make jokes about it	43 (43.9)	14 (14.3)	10 (10.2)	18 (18.4)
I have been making fun of the situation	41 (41.8)	15 (15.3)	10 (10.2)	22 (22.4)
<b>Acceptance</b>				
I accept the reality of the fact that it has happened	23 (23.5)	19 (19.4)	23 (23.5)	23 (23.5)
<b>Religion</b>				
I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs	40 (40.8)	15 (15.3)	15 (15.3)	19 (19.4)
I have been praying or meditating	28 (28.6)	18 (18.4)	17 (17.3)	25 (25.5)

## 4.7 TEST OF HYPOTHESES

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between the age of respondents and knowledge of romantic relationship.

**Result:** There is no significant relationship between the age of respondents and knowledge of romantic relationship. The P-value when calculated was greater than 0.05 which shows a non-significant association/relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It further explains that the age of the respondents doesn't affect their knowledge of romantic relationship.

The results can be seen in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Relationship between the age of respondents and the knowledge of romantic relationship**

Age	Knowledge on relationship breakup		df	Chi-square	P-value
	Low (%)	High (%)			
Less than 15 years old	64 (24.8)	194 (75.2)	1	2.752	0.097
16 years old and above	29 (17.9)	133 (82.1)			

## Hypothesis 2

There will be no significant association between the age of respondents and involvement in romantic relationship.

**Result:** There is a significant relationship between the age of respondents and their involvement in romantic relationship. The P-value when calculated was lesser than 0.05 which shows a significant association between the independent and dependent variables. It further explains that the age of the students affects their relationship status; the older they are, the more they are involved in romantic relationships.

The results can be seen in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Relationship between the age of respondents and relationship status**

Age	Level of relationship		df	Chi-square	P-value
	Yes (%)	No (%)			
Less than 15 years old	76 (29.6)	181 (70.4)	1	16.687	0.000
16 years old and above	80 (49.4)	82 (50.6)			



### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between the sex of respondents and ability to cope during relationship breakup.

**Result:** There is no significant relationship between the sex of respondents and ability to cope during relationship breakup. The P-value when calculated was greater than 0.05 which shows a non-significant association/relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The results can be seen in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Relationship between the sex of respondents and relationship breakup**

Sex	Relationship breakup		df	Chi-square	P-value
	Yes (%)	No (%)			
Male	48 (65.8)	25 (34.2)	1	0.407	0.524
Female	48 (60.8)	31 (39.2)			

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Discussion

##### 5.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

This study reveals that adolescents begin to experience relationships and relationship breakup as early as 9 years, as majority of the respondents 258 (61.4%) fell within the age bracket 9 – 15 years. This result is consistent with the result in the study carried out by Arnett et al (2014) which stated that feelings of muddle and hurt as a result of “love” have been found to be prevalent in adolescents and children as young as nine and also study carried out by Price, Hides, Cockshaw, Staneva and Stoyanov (2016) which revealed that over 50% of youths have dated by age 15.

This study also revealed that majority of the respondents are from the Yoruba ethnic group and this could be as a result of the geopolitical zone in which the study was carried out; southwest geopolitical zone which is mainly populated by the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria.

The foremost religion practiced by the respondents was Christianity which could also be due to the geopolitical location of the area in which the study was carried out and also because majority of the residents within the area practiced Christianity. Majority of the respondents who participated in this study were those in the Senior Secondary School (SSS) class III as compared to respondents in the Junior Secondary School (JSS) because those in the senior class were believed to be more mature and advanced enough to provide credible responses to the questions asked.

##### 5.1.2 Knowledge of Respondents about Relationship and Relationship Breakup

Many of the adolescents that partook in this study had good understanding of the concept of relationship, demonstrating good knowledge of the disadvantages of relationships and how to handle conflicts in a relationship. This could be as a result of their early involvement in relationships and also what they learn and observe from their parents in their various homes. Study by Thao Ha (2016) confirmed these statements as it reveals that early experiences of infatuation and love provide adolescents with chances to learn what romantic relationships are all about.

This study also reveals that in-school adolescents had good knowledge about relationship and relationship breakup and this could also be as a result of youth friendly and educative programmes that adolescents watch on televisions. The good knowledge adolescents had about relationships and relationship breakup can be ascribed to the fact that they also engage in relationships and learn from them as revealed in a study by Nicolls, Smith, Patterson, Stuart *et al.* (2014) documenting that over 80% of high school students had been on a date and so had had a relationship of some sort with the opposite sex and such experience broadens their view on the concept of relationships.

### **5.1.3 Prevalence of Relationship Breakup**

About a quarter of adolescents (22.9%) that partook in this study had experienced relationship breakup and this finding is absolutely consistent with study conducted by Connolly and McIsaac (2004) on 223 adolescents aged 17 to 19 which revealed that over half of the respondents (77%) reported ever had a romantic breakup. Although this finding by Connolly and McIsaac show a huge difference in the percentages of respondents who have experienced a breakup, it further proves the prevalence of relationship breakup among adolescents. The prevalence of romantic breakup between adolescents could be linked to negative interactions between them and increased levels of conflicts and this correlates with findings in study by Lantagne and colleagues (2017) who found that the number of lifetime stressful events, romantic appeal, and negative interactions (high level of conflict and low levels of support) all contributed to faster breakdown of romantic relationships between adolescents.

Also, on the frequency of relationship breakup among adolescents, this study revealed that among the respondents who have experienced breakup, 63.7% have experienced it once while 23.1% have experienced it twice, other respondents experienced breakup 3 to 10 times. This result is consistent with findings by Field, Diego, Pelaez, Deeds and Delgado (2010), which showed that 119 (76%) students had gone through relationship dissolution 3.5 months ago on average after a relationship that averaged 3.3 months' duration. The students had experienced 2.9 breakups on average, 2.0 of them having been with the same companion.

### **5.1.4 Perceptions of In-School Adolescents towards Relationship Breakup**

Sixty three percent of respondents agree that relationship breakup prevents them from studying effectively and this is consistent with findings from study carried out by Marete, Chiamaka, Gitonga, and Mwenda (2018) which showed that low school grades have been

connected with sensitive and mental influence of affairs among adolescents. Similarly, this finding is also consistent with findings in study carried out by Crissey (2006), which revealed that teenagers who began love affairs frequently had problems with finding equilibrium between the affair and school work. Crissey (2006) in her study added that this problem lays a burden on ways to sustain the affair and school together.

Teenagers have been found not to be able to pay attention to their studies when quarrels between them and their partners ensue (Bernales and Colonia, 2011) supported by Crissey (2006) who buttressed that students involved in love affairs are not only predisposed to "source of stress" but also experience turmoil. Relationship breakups have been found to affect the minds of those going through it and make it even more difficult for them to concentrate; adolescents are not left out in dealing with this difficulty as shown. Relationship breakup affects the minds of adults, talk less of adolescents, who are more susceptible to engaging in risky behaviours for the purpose of dealing with breakups.

It was also revealed in this study that fifty nine percent of respondents reported that relationship breakup causes them to feel pain, and this corresponds with study by Monroe, Rohde, Seeley, and Lewinsohn, (1999) which reported that 46% of students who developed Major Depressive Disorder in secondary school went through dissolution in the previous year. Major Depressive Disorder is connected with feelings of pain, sadness and discomfort. Individuals who experience breakup go through a great deal of pain, mostly emotional and most times, if situations such as this are not handled effectively, could lead one into a depressive state which also leads to more complex situations.

Study carried out by Thao Ha (2016) established that adolescents may be involved in potentially risky behaviours, documenting that youngsters who are "dumped", go to parties, consume a lot of alcohol and also involve themselves in risky sexual behaviours. The risk of depression and suicidal behaviours also increases. The findings from study carried out by Thao Ha (2016) correlates with the findings of this study which revealed that 49% of respondents agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to seek rebound relationships to feel better, 26.7% of respondents agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to consume drugs or substances to feel better and approximately 27.4% of respondents agreed that relationship breakups can cause them to use alcohol to feel better. Similarly, study carried out by Lindsay and Lynne (2011) revealed the actual possibility of getting another sexual partner increased afterwards a non-marital dissolution. Adolescents have been found

to have reduced stress from relationship breakup if they talk about it especially with family and friends. This study also confirms the fact as two hundred and eighteen respondents would rather talk to their friends, many respondents reported they would prefer to talk to their mothers, fathers and siblings if they were going through a romantic breakup and this is also proven in an online research by Davis, Shaver and Vernon (2003) which revealed 85% of the 5248 participants aged 15-29, felt lower levels of worrying and fear after the dissolution of an affair as they contacted family and friends for help.

### **5.1.5 Perceived Coping Strategies to be Checked Through By Students in Dealing with Romantic Breakup**

This present study reveals that in-school adolescents have good perceived coping mechanism in dealing with relationship breakup. This shows that respondents have pre-determined positive methods of dealing with relationship breakup should it occur.

Distractions are often perceived by many as an effective way of dealing with relationship dissolution. In this study, twenty nine percent of respondents reported that they will likely often distract themselves from thinking about breakup by hanging out with friends and this correlates with findings in a study by Chooet *al.* (1996), as it was revealed that people generally employ forms of distraction or techniques such as dampening the dissolution of an affair, such as concentrating more on work or extracurricular activities in an effort to disremember and disregard distress occurring as a result of the dissolution.

Two hundred and sixty seven (63.6%) respondents reported that they will likely never consume drugs or substances so they could heal from their breakup as a coping strategy. This could be linked to the fact that the respondents have good knowledge about relationship breakup, hence the influence over selecting a less harmful coping mechanism to deal with relationship breakup.

Twenty nine percent of the respondents reported that they will likely never sustain friendship with who they were involved with. This could be ascribed with the pain individuals feel as a result of a relationship termination. When feelings of hurt emerge, partners are likely to find it difficult to maintain friendship as a result of the emotional pain.

### **5.1.6 Actual Coping Strategies Developed By Respondents who had experienced Romantic Breakup**

A major finding in this study is that in-school adolescents have poor actual coping mechanisms in dealing with relationship breakup. The comparison between the perceived and actual coping mechanisms developed by the students show that the students know what to do in effectively managing termination of an affair but they do not know how to apply what they know about dealing with a romantic relationship breakup positively.

Outcomes of this study reveal that 16.3% of the respondents reported that they consume alcohol and abuse drugs to make themselves feel better a lot when going through a breakup, also about 16.3% of the respondents admit that they criticize themselves when going through a breakup a lot. These findings are similar with findings in a study conducted by Davis, Shaver, and Vernon (2003) which showed that participants who were “dumped” amplified alcohol consumption after the termination.

Similarly, a study carried out by Cooper, Russell, Skinner, Frone, and Mudar (1992); Todd, Armeli, and Tennen (2009) revealed that persons drink in reaction to undesirable feelings and this has been connected with substantial and problematic drinking.

Relationship breakups are often painful life experiences that one would feel the need to ‘take away the pain’ through means found to help. Different strategies are developed by different individuals in managing pain, some may be positive strategies, while others may be negative, exposing such individuals to health conditions. Although, due to the negative psychological consequences linked to relationship dissolution, people are thought to be emotionally weak and this is presumed to predispose them to risk of making poor decisions or engaging in risky behaviours (Barber and Cooper, 2011).

Adolescents in this study also reported other coping mechanisms that they develop in dealing with relationship breakup such as focusing more on work and other extracurricular activities that help them, praying or meditating, getting support and encouragement from well-meaning individuals while also learning to live with it.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This study investigated the prevalence of relationship breakup, and coping mechanisms developed by affected students in dealing with relationship breakup among in-school adolescents in Ibadan northwest local government area, Ibadan. On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. The comparison between the perceived and actual coping mechanisms developed by the students shows that the students know what to do in dealing with a romantic relationship breakup but they do not know how to apply what they do know in dealing with a romantic relationship breakup positively.
2. In-school adolescents have good knowledge about relationship and relationship breakup and negative perception about relationship breakups.
3. Although in-school adolescents have good perceived coping mechanisms, they have poor actual coping mechanisms.
4. It is generally perceived that adolescents should not be involved in relationships and hence no reason for them to experience breakups at such early ages, however, in the course of this study, it was found that less than one third of the respondents (37.1%) have ever been involved in a relationship and respondents' experience of break up in a relationship was found at 22.9% and 8.6% of the respondents are currently going through a relationship breakup.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations could increase the percentage of people that have positive perception about relationship breakup, further increase the percentage of people that have good knowledge about relationship and relationship breakup, and reduce the actual risky behaviours that arise as a result of coping with relationship breakups to the most minimal level.

1. More health education and advertisement should be done to educate the students on the effects or consequences of negative coping mechanisms so that the percentage of students that engage in risky behaviours as a result of breakups can be reduced.
2. Guidance and counseling centers in the schools should provide more education and awareness on the management of relationships and breakups to increase the percentage of students that have positive perceptions about relationship breakups.
3. Counseling units focusing on mental health challenges, including student-student relationships and lifestyle should be instituted in the health system of schools.
4. Awareness programmes to orient the students on right decision making skills as related to romantic relationships and other aspects of life to improve their quality of life should be carried out in schools.



#### **5.4 Implication of findings for Health Promotion and Education**

The results obtained in this study several implications for planning, development and implementation for health promotion and education on the risks associated with relationship breakup among in-school adolescents.

Though concerns relating to relationships and relationship breakups are often ignored and not given absolute attention as it is generally believed that adolescents do not engage in relationships at early ages (Shulman and Connolly, 2013). It has been deduced from this study that adolescents as young as 9 years have ever been involved in a relationship. Adolescents when hurt in relationship breakups seek self-destructive behaviours such as consuming alcohol, overdosing on drugs, etc as means of coping with their hurt during romantic relationship dissolution.

Adolescents that participated in this study highlighted coping strategies (perceived and actual) developed in dealing with relationship breakup. Adolescents were however found to have better perceived coping strategies as opposed to their poor actual coping strategies when they do actually go through relationship breakups. Some of the poor coping strategies highlighted include self-destructive behaviours such as consuming alcohol, overdosing on drugs and negative self-criticisms. Although adolescents employ some positive strategies in dealing with relationship terminations, they also employ negative strategies which predispose them to several negative health consequences and are thus disadvantageous to their overall wellbeing and the wellbeing of the people around them, therefore, the necessity for the issue should not be put aside or ignored. It is imperative that the populace is enlightened on the risk relationship breakups poses to adolescents so that better guidance can be incorporated.

This study is important in the following areas:

- **Health education and public awareness:** The results from this study revealed that not only do adolescents truly engage in relationships and they experience relationship breakups, they also have poor actual coping mechanisms in dealing with relationship breakups which could expose them to a variety of health challenges. Public enlightenment on adolescent relationships and management will play an effective role in enlightening the public about the risk behaviours adolescents are likely to engage in, in effort to cope with relationship breakups and then provide insights on how to help adolescents better manage their emotions.

- **Medical/preventive approach:** Healthcare support should be readily available to victims of relationship dissolution, especially those adolescents that will require mental health services in coping positively with relationship breakups. Meanwhile, random enlightenment and consistent guidance by parents, guardians or caregivers will serve to prevent likely risky behaviours adolescents may adopt to deal with their relationship breakups.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## REFERENCES

- Abbott, A. 2002. Neuroscience: addicted. *Nature*. *PubMed PMID*: 12410246. 419 (6910):872-878
- Akindele-Oscar, A. B. and Ayodele, K.O. 2004. Undergraduates' knowledge of reproductive health issues and its relationship with their permissive sexual expression. *Nigerian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 8,1, 240-249.
- Alma, M. J. and Fretzy, C. 2011. The Effects of Romantic Relationships on the Academic Performance of University of the Philippines – Cebu College Students. *PubMed PMID*: 26653442. 44(2):230-289.
- Anna, R. 2012. The Roles of Spirituality And Sexuality In Response To Romantic Breakup. *PubMed PMID*: 24424331. 43(1):225-294.
- Arnett, J.J. 2014. Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood; *Pearson Education Limited*: New York, NY, USA. *PubMed PMID*: 28974753. 44(1):331-476.
- Babcock, R. and Deprince, A. 2013. Factors contributing to ongoing intimate partner abuse; childhood betrayal trauma and dependence on one's perpetrator. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.;28:1385-402.
- Bahamas Department of Statistics. 2012. Births 1970-2010. Retrieved from <http://statistics.bahamas.gov.bs/download/084616400.pdf>
- Bandura, A. 1977. Social Learning Theory. New York: *General Learning Press*. (p118-190).
- Barber, L. L. and Cooper, L. M. 2011. On the rebound: Getting over the loss of a romantic relationship. *PubMed PMID*: 20963453. 43(3):321-474.
- Barlow, M. and Cromer, L. 2006. Trauma-relevant characteristics in a university human subjects pool population: gender, major betrayal and latency of participation. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*. *PubMed PMID*: 16769666. 7(2):59-75.
- Baumeister, R. F., Wotman, S. R. and Stillwell, A. M. 1993. Unrequited love: On heartbreak, anger, guilt, scriptlessness and humiliation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 64(3):377-394.
- Bayram, N. and Bilgel, N. 2008. The prevalence and socio-demographic correlations of depression, anxiety and stress among a group of university students. *Journal of Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. *PubMed PMID*: 18398558. 43(8):667-672.

- Beiter, R., Nash, R., McCrady, M., Rhoades, D., Linscomb, M. and Clarahan, M. 2015. The prevalence and correlates of depression, anxiety and stress in a sample of college students. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. PubMed PMID: 25462401. 173:90-96.
- Billings, A. G. and Moos, R. H. 1981. The role of coping responses and social resources in attenuating the stress of life events. *Journal of Behavioural Medicine*, 4, 139- 157.
- Black, P. H. 2002. Stress and the inflammatory response: a review of neurogenic inflammation. *Journal of Brain Behaviour and Immunity*. PubMed PMID: 12480495. 16(6):622-635.
- Bounhoure, J. 2012. Takotsubo or stress cardiomyopathy. *Journal of Cardiovascular Psychiatry and Neurology*. PubMed PMID: 637672. 29:1-4.
- Brandy, J. M., Penckofer, S., Solari-Twadell, P. A. and Velsor-Friedrich, B. 2015. Factors predictive of depression in first-year college students. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services*. PubMed PMID: 25654575. 53(2):38-44.
- Brown, B. B., Feiring, C. and Furman, W. 1999. Missing the Love Boat: Why Researchers Have Shied Away. In *The Development of Romantic Relationships in Adolescence*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.; pp. 1-18.
- Buss, D.M. and Perilloux, C. 2008. Breaking up romantic relationship: Cost experienced and coping strategies deployed. *Journal of Evolutionary Psychology*. 6(1), 164-181.
- Carver, K., Joyner, K. and Udry, R. J. 2003. National Estimates of Adolescent Romantic Relationships. In: Florsheim P, editor. *Adolescent Romantic Relationships and Sexual Behaviour: Theory, Research, and Practical Implications*. Mahwah, NJ: *Journal of Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates*. Pp. 23-56.
- Cassie, S. and Richard, B. 2014. Coping with Break-Ups: Rebound Relationships and Gender Socialization. *Journal of Social Sciences*. doi:10.3390/socsci3010024. 3, 24-43.
- Collins, A., Welsh, D. and Furman, W. 2009. Adolescent Romantic Relationships. *Journal of Annual Review of Psychology*, 60:25.1-25 22.
- Collins, W. A. 2003. "More than Myth: The Developmental Significance of Romantic Relationships during Adolescence," *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 1-24.
- Collins, W. A., Deborah, P. W. and Wyndol, F. 2009. "Adolescent Romantic Relationships." *Journal of Annual Review of Psychology* 60(1):631-52.

- Connolly, J. A. and Konarski, R. 1994. Peer self-concept in adolescence: analysis of factor structure and of associations with peer experience. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. doi: 10.1037/a0032587. 4, 385-403.
- Connolly, J. and Johnson, A. 1996. Adolescents' romantic relationships and the structure and quality of their close interpersonal ties. *Personal Relationships*, 3, 185-195. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6811.1996.tb00111.x *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 46, 232-242. doi: 0.1177/0748175613481979
- Connelly, J. and McIsaac, C. 2009. "Adolescents' Explanations for Romantic Dissolutions: A Developmental Perspective," *Journal of Adolescence*, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 1209-1223.
- Connolly, J. and McIsaac, C. 2004. Romantic dissolutions in adolescence: Negative affect, attributions, and romantic confidence. In J. Connolly and C. Feiring (Chairs), Positive and negative processes within romantic relationships. *Poster symposium presented at the biennial meeting of the society for Research on Adolescence, Baltimore*.
- Cooper, M. L., Russell, M., Skinner, J. B., Frone, M. R. and Mudar, P. 1992. Stress and alcohol use: Moderating effects of gender, coping, and alcohol expectancies. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 101, 139-152.
- Crissey, S. R. 2006. Gender differences in the academic consequences of adolescent heterosexual romantic relationships (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 1179965251) (p233-352).
- David, M. and Buss, 2008. Psychology Department, University of Texas at Austin, USA. *PubMed PMID*: 20764321. 46(7):255-345.
- Davis, D., Shaver, P. R. and Vernon, M. L. 2003. Physical, emotional and behavioural reactions to breaking up: The roles of gender, age, emotional involvement, and attachment style. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. *PubMed ID*: 15018675. 29, 871-884.
- Eisenberger, N., Lieberman, M. and Williams, K. 2003. Does rejection hurt? An fMRI study on social exclusion. *Journal of Social Sciences*. *PubMed PMID*: 14551436. 302(5643): 290-292.
- Elliott, D. and Briere, J. 1992. Sexual abuse trauma among professional women: Validating the Trauma Symptom Checklist-40. *Child Abuse and Neglect*. *PubMed PMID*: 1617473. 16(3):391-398.
- Ernest, W. B. and Paul, W. 1953. Engagement and Marriage. Philadelphia, PA: *Joshua Ballinger Lippincott*. *PubMed PMID*: 23453356. 21(4):214-255.

- Eugene, J. K., Karen, R. D. and Sonia, R. S. 1970. "A research note on male-female decisions to leave romantic relationships. Measurement and Evaluation in differentials in the experience of heterosexual love." *The Journal of Sex Research* 6: 64–72.
- Fetto, J. 2003. Love stinks. Statistics On Failed Relationships. *PubMed PMID*: 124343. 16(3):323-392. Retrieved January 2008.
- Field, T., Dieg, M., Pelaez, M. and Deeds, D. J. 2012. Depression and related problems in university students. *College Student Journal*.;46:193-202.
- Fisher, H., Xu, X., Araon, A. and Brown, L. 2016. Intense, passionate, romantic love: A natural addiction? How the fields that investigate romance and substance abuse can inform each other. *Journal of Frontiers in Psychology*. *PubMed PMID*: 27242601. 7:687-689.
- Fisher, H. E., Aron, A. and Brown, L. 2006. Romantic love: a mammalian brain system for mate choice. *Journal of Transcendental Philosophy, British Journal of Sociology and Journal of Biological Sciences*. *PubMed Central PMCID*: 1764845.361(14776):2173-86
- Freyd, J. J., Klest, B. and Allard, C. B. 2005. Betrayal trauma: relationship to physical health, psychological distress, and a written disclosure intervention. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*. *PubMed PMID*: 16172083.6(3):83-104.
- Furman, W. 2002. The emerging field of adolescent romantic relationships. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 11(5), 177-180. Retrieved from [http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/dmessenger/c\\_c/rsrscs/rdgs/peers\\_social\\_general/furman.adol\\_romance.curddir2002.pdf](http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/dmessenger/c_c/rsrscs/rdgs/peers_social_general/furman.adol_romance.curddir2002.pdf)
- Genevieve, B. and Vicky, J. T. 2003. "Defense mechanisms and coping strategies in conjugal relationships: An integration." *International Journal of Psychology*. doi:10.1080/00207590244000214.38: 79–90.
- Gerra, G., Monti, D., Panerai, A., Sacerdote, P., Anderlini, R. and Avazini P. 2003. Long-term immune-endocrine effects of bereavement: Relationships with anxiety levels and mood. *Journal of Psychiatry Research*. *PubMed PMID*: 14656449.121(2):145-158.
- Giordano, P. C., Wendy, D. M. and Monica, A. L. 2006. "Adolescent Romantic Relationships: An Emerging Portrait of Their Nature and Developmental Significance." Pp. 127–50 in *Romance and Sex in Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood: Risks and Opportunities*, edited by A. C. Crouter and A. Booth. Mahwah, NJ: *Journal of Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates*.

- Goldberg, L. and Freyd, J. 2006. Self-reports of potentially traumatic experiences in an adult community sample: gender differences and test-retest stabilities of the items in a brief betrayal-trauma survey. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*. PubMed PMID: 16873229. 7(3):39-63.
- Goldsmith, R., Chesney, S., Heath, N. and Barlow, M. 2013. Emotion regulation difficulties mediate associations between betrayal trauma and symptoms of posttraumatic stress, depression and anxiety. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. PubMed PMID: 23737296. 26(3):376-84.
- Griffin, M. G. and Taylor, G. T. 1995. Norepinephrine modulation of social memory: evidence for a time-dependent functional recovery of behaviour. *Journal of Behavioural Neuroscience*. PubMed PMID: 7662157. 109(3):466-538.
- Guo, L., Deng, J., He, Y., Deng, X., Huang, J. and Huang, G. 2014. Prevalence and correlates of sleep disturbance and depressive symptoms among Chinese adolescents: a cross-sectional survey. *British Medical Journal Open*.; 4(7):e005517. PubMed PMID: 25079937.
- Hansen, M. 2013. Fin love. Get love. Keep love. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 121-147.
- Hill, C. T., Rubin, Z. and Peplau, L. A. 1976. "Breakups before Marriage: The End of 103 Affairs," *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 147-168.
- Hill, R., Yaroslavsky, I. and Pettit, J. 2015. Enhancing depression screening to identify college students at risk for persistent depressive symptoms. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. PubMed PMID: 25437632. 174:1-6.
- Hill, C.T., Rubin, Z. and Peplau, L.A. 1976. Breakups before marriage: The end of 103 affairs. PubMed PMID: 7654739. 103(5):100-160.
- Horowitz, M. J., Siegel, B., Holen, A., Bonanno, G. A., Milbrath, C. and Stinson, C. H. 1997. Diagnostic criteria for complicated grief disorder. *American Journal of Psychiatry*. PubMed PMID: 9210739. 154(7):4-10.
- Hysenbegasi, A., Hass, S. L. and Rowland, C. R. 2005. The impact of depression on the academic productivity of university students. *Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics*. PubMed PMID: 16278502. 8(3):145-151.
- Jerves, R. and Enzlin, 2013. Characteristics of Romantic Relationship During Adolescence: A Review of Anglo-western Literature. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. MASKANA, Vol. 4, No. 2.

- Johnson, A. K. and Grippo, A. J. 2006. Sadness and broken hearts: Neurohumoral mechanisms and co-morbidity of ischemic heart disease and psychological depression. *Journal of Physiology and Pharmacology*.;57Supp 11:529-534. PubMed PMID: 17244936. *Journal of Social Issues*, 32, 147-168.
- Kendler, K., Hettema, J., Butera, F., Gardner, C. and Prescott, C. 2003. Life event dimensions of loss, humiliation, entrapment, and danger in the prediction of onsets of major depression and generalized anxiety. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 60, 789-796.
- Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K. R. and Walters, E. E. 2005. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 62(6):593-602.
- Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K., McGuire, L., Robles, T. F. and Glaser, R. 2002. Emotions, morbidity, and mortality: New perspectives from psychoneuroimmunology. *Annual Review of Psychology*.;53:83-107.
- Kristin, R. G. 2011. Sense of Coherence: The Relationship to Personal Growth and Distress after a Breakup. *Psychological Reports*. PubMed PMID: 11351902. 77(3):355-528.
- Kuttler, A. F. and La Greca, A. M. 2004. Linkages among adolescent girls' romantic relationships, best friendships, and peer networks. *Journal of Adolescence*, doi:10.1016/27, 395-414
- Lanutti, P. J. and Cameron, K. A. 2002. Beyond the breakup: heterosexual and homosexual post-dissolutional relationships. *Communication Quarterly*, 50(2), 153-170.
- Leonard, B. 2006. HPA and immune axes in stress: involvement of the serotonergic system. *Neuroimmunomodulation*. PubMed PMID: 17709948. 13(5-6):268-276
- Lewandowski, G. W., Aron, A., Bassis, S. and Kunak J. 2006. Losing a self-expanding relationship: Implications for the self-concept. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 13, 317-331
- Lieblich, A. R., Tuval-Mashiach, R. and Zibler, T. 1998. "Narrative Research: Reading, Analysis and Interpretation," *Applied Social Research Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Vol. 47, pp. 1-200.
- Low, N., Dugas, E., O'Laughlin, E., Rodriguez, D., Contreras, G. and Chaiton, M. 2012. Common stressful life events and difficulties are associated with mental health symptoms and substance use in young adolescents. *BioMed Central Psychiatry*. 12:116. PubMed Central PMCID: PMC3466152.



- Luciana, M., Collins, P. F. and Depue, R. A. 1998. Opposing roles for dopamine and serotonin in the modulation of human spatial working memory functions. *Cerebral Cortex*. 8(3):218-244. *PubMed PMID*: 9617916. 8(3):218-244
- MacDonald, G. and Leary, M. R. 2005. Why does social exclusion hurt? The relationship between social and physical pain. *Psychological Bulletin*. *PubMed PMID*: 15740417. 131(2):202-223
- Martin, C., Cromer, L., Deprince, A. and Freyd, J. 2013. The role of cumulative trauma, betrayal, and appraisals in understanding trauma symptomatology. *Journal of Psychological Trauma*. 52(2):110-118. *PubMed Central PMCID*: PMC3608140. 52(2):110-118
- Martin, T. L. 2002. Disenfranchising the brokenhearted. In K.J. Doka (Ed.), *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice*. Champaign, Illinois: *Research Press*. 233-249
- Mearns, J. 1991. Coping with a breakup: Negative mood regulation expectancies and depression following the end of a romantic relationship. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. *PubMed PMID*: 2016673. 60(2):327-34.
- Megan P., Leanne H., Wendell C., Aleksandra A. S. and Stoyan R. S. 2015. Young Love: Romantic Concerns and Associated Mental Health Issues among Adolescent Help-Seekers. *PubMed PMID*: 15784567. 47(6):223-387
- Moller, N. P., McCarthy, C. J. and Fouladi, R. T. 2002. Earned attachment security: Its relationship to coping resources and stress symptoms among college students following relationship breakup. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(2), 213-230.
- Monroe, S. M., Rohde, P., Seeley, J. R. and Lewinsohn, P. M. 1999. Life events and depression in adolescence: relationship loss as a prospective risk factor for first onset of major depressive disorder. *Journal of abnormal psychology*, 108, 606-614. doi: 10.1037/0021-843X.108.4.606
- Montgomery, M. J. and Sorell, G. T. 1998. Love and dating experience in early and middle adolescence: Grade and gender comparisons. *Journal of Adolescence*. [CrossRef] [PubMed] 21, 677-689
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. 2004. Leadership of a healthy campus: an ecological approach to student success. *PubMed PMID*: 20026753. 43(3):253-395

- Nicolls, D., Russell, S. C., Dean, P. S., Deveaux, S. L., Gibson, M. I., Williams, E. J, Pinder, D. A. and Fielding, W. J. 2014. Attitudes of high school students regarding intimate relationships and gender norms in New Providence, The Bahamas. *The International Journal of Bahamian Studies*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v20i1.225>. 20(1), 38-51.
- O'Sullivan, L. F. and Thompson, A. E. 2014. Sexuality in adolescence. In D. L. Tolman, L. M. Diamond, J. A. Bauermeister, W. H. George, J. G. Pfaus, L. M. Ward, ... L. M. Ward (Eds.), *APA handbook of sexuality and psychology, Vol. 1: Person-based approaches* Washington, DC, US: *American Psychological Association*. doi:10.1037/14193-015. (pp. 433-486).
- Overbeek, G., Vollebergh, W., Engels, R. C. and Meeus, W. 2003. Young adults' relationship transitions and the incidence of mental disorders. *Journal of Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. doi: 10.1007/s00127-003-0689-1. 38, 669-676.
- Oyo State Latest News. 2019. Ibadan North-West Local Government. Retrieved from <https://oyostate.gov.ng>
- Patricia, C., Timothy, L. and Elaine, H. 1996. "Gender, love schemas, and reactions to romantic break-ups." *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality* 11.143-60.
- Perilloux, C. and Buss, D. M. 2008. Breaking up romantic relationships: Coping experienced and coping strategies deployed. *Journal of Evolutionary Psychology*, 6(1), 164-181.
- Prerna, V. and Anurakti, M. 2015. Adolescent Romantic Relationships. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology* ISSN 2348-5396 (e) | Volume 3, Issue 1, DIP: C00102V3I12015 <http://www.ijip.in> | ISSN: 2349-3429 (p)
- Price, M., Hides, L., Cockshaw, W., Staneva, A. A. and Stoyanov, S. R. 2016. Young love: Romantic concerns and associated mental health issues among adolescent help-seekers. *The Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, 6(2), 1-14.
- Rachman, S. 2010. Betrayal. A psychological analysis. *Journal of Behaviour Research and Therapy*. *PubMed PMID*: 20035927. 48(4):304-311.
- Reed, W. L. and Gretchen, A. W. 2014. The Emotions of Romantic Relationships: Do They Wreck Havoc on Adolescents? *PubMed PMID*: 12435632. 43(3):155-390
- Richard, S. L. and Susan, F. 1984. Stress, Appraisal, and Coping. New York: *Spring Publishing Company*. *PubMed PMID*: 20047654. 53(6):324-492
- Samaranayake, C., Arroll, B. and Fernand, A. 2002. Sleep disorders depression, anxiety and satisfaction with life among young adults: a survey of university students in

- Auckland, New Zealand. N Z Med J.127(1399):13- 22. *PubMed PMID*: 25145302.  
[100]. [66]. [71].
- Sandra, Y. R., Christine, K. M. and Michelle, K. D. 2008. "Gender differences in the relationship between perceived social support and student adjustment during early adolescence." *School Psychology Quarterly*. 23 496–514. doi: 10.1037/1045/3830.23.4.496.
- Sbarra, D. A. 2006. Predicting the onset of emotional recovery following non-marital relationship dissolution: Survival analyses of sadness and anger. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, doi: 10.1177/0146167205280913. 32, 298-312
- Sbarra, D. A. and Emery, R. E. 2005. The emotional sequelae of nonmarital relationship dissolution: Analysis of change and intra-individual variability over time. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. 12, 213-232.
- Schultz, W., Dayan, P. and Montague P. R. 1997. A neural substrate of prediction and reward. *Sci*. 275. *PubMed PMID*: 9054347.(5306):1593-1598.
- Scully, J., Tosi, H. and Banning, K. 2000. Life event checklists: Revisiting the social readjustment rating scale after 30 years. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 60, 864 876.
- Shear, K. and Shair, H. 2005. Attachment, loss, and complicated grief. *Journal of Developmental Psychobiology*. 47 *PubMed PMID*: 16252293.(3):253-319.
- Shimek, S. and Bello, O. 2014. Coping with break-ups: rebound relationships and gender socialization. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 3, 24-43.
- Shmuel, S., Inge, S. K. and Miri, S. 2017. Adolescent Depressive Symptoms and Breakup Distress During Early Emerging Adulthood: Associations With the Quality of Romantic Interactions. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167696817698900>
- Shulman, S. and Kipnis, O. 2001. Adolescent romantic relationships. A look from the future. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24, 337-351 2001
- Shulman, S. and Scharf, M. 2000. "Adolescent Romantic Behaviours and Perceptions: Age- and Gender-Related Differences and Links with Family and Peer Relationships," *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 99-118.
- Slavich, G., Way, B., Eisenberger, N. and Taylor, S. 2010. Neural sensitivity to social rejection is associated with inflammatory responses to social stress. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*. *PubMed PMID*: 2930449.107(33):14817-22.

- Slotter, E., Gardner, W. and Finkel, E. 2009. Who am I without you? The influence of romantic breakup on the self-concept. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 36(2), 147-160.
- Sprecher, S. 1994. "Two Sides to the Breakup of Dating Relationships," *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 199-222.
- Sprecher, S. and Fehr, B. 1998. The dissolution of close relationships. In J. H. Harvey (Ed.), *Perspectives on loss: A sourcebook*. Philadelphia: Brunner/Magel Inc. (pp. 99-112)
- Sprecher, S., Felmlee, D., Metts, S., Fehr, B. and Vanni, D. 1998. Factors associated with distress following the breakup of a close relationship. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 15, 791-809.
- Stanley, S. M., Rhoades, G. K. and Fincham, F. D. 2011. Understanding romantic relationships among emerging adults: The significant roles of cohabitation and ambiguity. In F. D. Fincham and M. Cui (Eds.), *Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood* (pp. 234–251). Cambridge, England: *Cambridge University Press*.
- Starr, L.R., Davila, J., Stroud, C.B., Clara Li, P.C., Yoneda, A., Hershenberg, R., Ramsay and Miller, M. 2012. Love hurts (in more ways than one): Specificity of psychological symptoms as predictors and consequences of romantic activity among early adolescent girls. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*. 68, 373–381. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
- Stroebe, M. and Schut, H. 1999. The dual process model of coping with bereavement: Rationale and description. *Death Studies*. PubMed PMID: 10848151. 23(3):197-224.
- Stroud L. R., Tanofsky, K. M., Wilfley, D. E. and Salovey, P. 2000. The Yale Interpersonal Stressor (YIPS): affective, physiological, and behavioural responses to a novel interpersonal rejection paradigm. *Annals of Behavioural Medicine*. PubMed PMID: 11126465. 204-213.
- Tashiro, T. and Frazier, P. 2003. "I'll never be in a relationship like that again": Personal growth following romantic relationship breakups. *Journal of Sociology and Personal Relationships*. 10, 113-128.
- Thao, H. 2016. New Research: Keys to understanding adolescent romantic relationships. *Journal of Psychology*. 100, 253–353.
- Tiffany, F., Miguel, D., Martha, P., Osvelia, D. and Jeannette, D. 2010. Breakup Distress and Loss of Intimacy in University Students. *Journal of Psychology*. doi:10.4236/psych.2010.13023.1: 173-177 (<http://www.SciRP.org/journal/psych>)
- Uchino, B., Kiecolt, G. J. and Glaser, R. 2000. Psychological modulation of cellular immunity. In: Cacioppo JT, Tassinary LG, Berntson GG, editors. *Handbook of*

- psycho-physiology. New York: *Cambridge University Press*. *PubMed PMID*: 19983625.48(3):134-261.
- Veronika, A. L. 2012. It's Complicated: Romantic Breakups and Their Aftermath on Facebook. *Journal of Developmental Psychobiology*. *PubMed PMID*: 14352673.51(5):112-253.
- Weichold, K. and Barber, B. 2008. Introduction to qualities of romantic relationships in adolescence and adulthood. *International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development*. 1. Retrieved from [http://www.issbd.org/resources/files/ISSBD1\(53\)1-28.pdf](http://www.issbd.org/resources/files/ISSBD1(53)1-28.pdf)
- Wittstein, I. S. 2012. Stress cardiomyopathy: a syndrome of catecholamine-mediated myocardial stunning. *Journal of Molecular and Cellular Biology*. *PubMed PMID*: 22297544.32(5):847-57.
- Wittstein, L. S., Thiemann, D. R., Lima, J., Baughman, K. T., Schulman, S. P. and Gerstenblith, G. 2005. Neurohumoral features of myocardial stunning due to sudden emotional stress. *The New England Journal of Medicine*. *PubMed PMID*: 15703419.352(6):539-547.
- Zimmer, M. J. and Vickers, C. 2007. Romantic experiences and depressive symptoms: testing the intensifying roles of rejection sensitivity and relationship commitment. Conference Proceedings of the Combined 7th Annual APS PORIG Conference, 112-118.
- Zuo, Z., Song, H., Zhang, Y. and Zhang, X. 2016. Romantic love vs. drug addiction may inspire a new treatment for addiction. *Journal of Frontiers in Psychology*. 7:1436. *PubMed Central PMCID*: PMC5031705.234-376.

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDY

Greetings, I am a Master of Public Health student of the Department of Health Promotion and Education, Faculty of Public Health, University of Ibadan. I am conducting my research project on the **Prevalence of Relationship Breakup, And Coping Mechanisms Developed by In-School Adolescents in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan.**

The questions won't take much of your time. I will be grateful if you can spend some time answering these questions honestly. All the information provided will be kept confidential and will not be shown to another person.

Consent: I have read the description of the research and I understand that my participation is voluntary. I know enough about the purpose, methods, risks and benefits of the research to judge that I want to partake in it. I understand that I may freely stop being part of this study at any time.

DATE: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

Survey identification number .....
------------------------------------

### SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex: 1. Male <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Female <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Age (in years as at last birthday) .....
3. Ethnic group: 1. Yoruba <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Hausa <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Igbo <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Others
4. Religion: 1. Christianity <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Islam <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Traditional <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Others...
5. School .....
6. Class .....

### SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE OF IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

S/N	Questions	Yes	No
7.	<b>Relationship is?</b>		
i.	Intimate interpersonal relationship that involves physical or emotional intimacy		
ii.	Voluntary mutual relationship where two individuals agree they date		
iii.	Cooperation of people to achieve a set goal		
iv.	Relationship where two people decide to be friends		
v.	Other specify:		

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

S/N	Disadvantages of relationship breakup are	Yes	No
8.	It leads to depression		
9.	It is associated with negative psychological outcome such as distress		
10.	It can make you to develop self-destructive behaviours		
11.	It can make you to lose focus in your academics		
12.	It can make you lose interest in doing things you love		
13.	It does not have any disadvantages		

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

S/N	Ways to deal with conflicts in a relationship are	Yes	No
	Talk about the conflict and find peaceful solution(s)		
	Ignore your partner until you or your partner decides to breakup		
	Find a way to hurt your partner back if you have been hurt		
	Seek advice from older people on how to manage conflicts		
	Apologize even though you are not at fault		

**SECTION C: PREVALENCE OF RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS**

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

19. Have you ever been involved in a relationship? Yes  No  If “NO”, skip to

**SECTION D**

20. Are you presently in a relationship? Yes  No

21. If “Yes”, how long have you been involved in a relationship? .....

22. Have you ever experienced a breakup in a relationship? Yes  No

23. Are you currently going through a relationship breakup? Yes  No

24. How many times have you experienced a breakup in a relationship? .....

**SECTION D: PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP**

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

S/N	Relationship breakup:	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
25.	Prevents you from studying effectively			
26.	Causes you to feel pain?			
27.	If not handled positively can cause damage to your future relationship patterns			
28.	Can cause you to seek rebound relationships to feel better			
29.	Can cause you to use drugs/substances to feel better			
30.	Can cause you to use alcohol to feel better			

S/N	Question	Yes	No
31.	<b>How would you feel if you're rejected in a relationship?</b>		
i.	Sad		
ii.	I would not feel differently (Neutral)		
iii.	I don't know how I would feel		
32.	<b>Who would you prefer to talk to if you were going through a relationship breakup?</b>		

i.	Mom		
ii.	Dad		
iii.	Siblings		
iv.	Friends		
v.	School counselor		
vi.	Others specify:		
33.	<b>What would you do if your boyfriend/girlfriend breaks your heart?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
i.	I would take it like it never happened (move on)		
ii.	I would keep begging till I am taken back		
iii.	I don't know what I would do		
iv.	Others specify:		

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

**(NOTE: IF YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS LED TO A BREAKUP, PLEASE SKIP THIS PART AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE. IF NOT, GO ON AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE)**

**SECTION E: PERCEIVED COPING STRATEGIES DEVELOPED BY STUDENTS IN DEALING WITH RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP (Adapted from Brief COPE)**

**Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question**

S/N	Questions	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
34.	I will distract myself from thinking about it by hanging out with friends				
35.	I will always talk about it				
36.	I will try to not think about it				
37.	I will use drugs or substances to make me feel better				
38.	I will blame my ex-partner for the breakup to make me feel better				
39.	I will remain friends with my ex-partner				
40.	I will ignore my feelings intentionally				
41.	I will pray about it to feel better				



**SECTION F: ACTUAL COPING STRATEGIES DEVELOPED BY THE AFFECTED STUDENTS IN DEALING WITH RELATIONSHIP BREAKUP (Brief COPE)**

Please indicate by ticking (✓) the number that represents your choice of response for each question

Code numbers: 1 = I haven't been doing this at all, 2 = I have been doing this a little bit, 3 = I have been doing this a medium amount, 4 = I have been doing this a lot

Instruction: please tick the answer you feel as appropriate for each question

S/N	Coping Mechanisms	1	2	3	4
42.	Have you been turning to work or other activities to take your mind off things?				
43.	Have you been concentrating your efforts on doing something about the situation you are in?				
44.	Have you been saying to yourself 'this is not real'?				
45.	Have you been using alcohol or other drugs to make yourself feel better?				
46.	Have you been getting emotional support from others?				
47.	Have you been giving up trying to deal with it?				
48.	Have you been taking actions to try to make the situation better?				
49.	Have you been refusing to believe that it has happened?				
50.	Have you been saying things to let your unpleasant feelings escape?				
51.	Have you been getting help and advice from other people?				
52.	Have you been using alcohol or other drugs to help you get through it?				
53.	Have you been trying to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive?				
54.	Have you been criticizing yourself?				
55.	Have you been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do?				
56.	Have you been getting comfort and understanding from someone?				
57.	Have you been giving up the attempt to cope?				
58.	Have you been looking for something good in what is happening?				
59.	Have you been making jokes about it?				

60.	Have you been doing something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, and shopping?				
61.	Have you been accepting the reality of the fact that it has happened?				
62.	Have you been expressing your negative feelings?				
63.	Have you been trying to find comfort in your religion or spiritual beliefs?				
64.	Have you been trying to get advice or help from other people about what to do?				
65.	Have you been learning to live with it?				
66.	Have you been thinking hard about what steps to take?				
67.	Have you been blaming yourself for things that happened?				
68.	Have you been praying or meditating?				
69.	Have you been making fun of the situation?				

**Thank you for your time spent with me.**

# ETHICAL APPROVAL

TELEGRAMS.....

TELEPHONE.....



## MINISTRY OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & STATISTICS DIVISION PRIVATE MAIL BAG NO. 5027, OYO STATE OF NIGERIA

Your Ref. No. ....

All communications should be addressed to

the Honorable Commissioner quoting

Our Ref. No. AD 13/479/1410

15<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

The Principal Investigator,  
Department of Health Promotion and Education,  
Faculty of Public Health,  
College of Medicine,  
University of Ibadan,  
Ibadan.

**Attention: Akinvemiju Temitope**

**ETHICS APPROVAL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL IN OYO STATE**

This is to acknowledge that your Research Proposal titled: "Relationship Breakup and Coping Mechanisms among In-School Adolescents in Ibadan Northwest Local Government Area, Ibadan." has been reviewed by the Oyo State Ethics Review Committee.

2. The committee has noted your compliance. In the light of this, I am pleased to convey to you the full approval by the committee for the implementation of the Research Proposal in Oyo State, Nigeria.
3. Please note that the National Code for Health Research Ethics requires you to comply with all institutional guidelines, rules and regulations, in line with this, the Committee will monitor closely and follow up the implementation of the research study. However, the Ministry of Health would like to have a copy of the results and conclusions of findings as this will help in policy making in the health sector.

4. Wishing you all the best.

  
Dr. Abbas Gbolahan  
Director, Planning, Research & Statistics  
Secretary, Oyo State, Research Ethics Review Committee