

INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS-INDUCED INTERVENTIONS ON SUSTAINABLE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM DISINTEGRATED FAMILIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of religious-induced interventions on sustainable development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The study population included 1543 principals, 3086 vice principals, 37,453 teachers, and 1,834,995 students in South-South Nigeria's public senior secondary schools. A sample of 918 respondents was selected using multistage sampling across 102 public senior secondary schools in four South-South Nigerian states. A 24-item instrument titled "Religious-Induced Interventions and Sustainable Educational Development of Secondary School Students from Disintegrated Families Scale" (RISEDSSDFS), with 0.917 reliability, was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The study revealed a grand mean score of 3.60, indicating that religious-induced interventions strongly influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families. Also, the category of the respondents' administrators, teachers, and students) significantly influenced their rating on how religious-induced interventions influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria ($F_{2, 870} = .000$, $p < .05$). The study recommended among others that religious organizations should conduct pre-marriage classes and marriage seminars that emphasize love, forgiveness, tolerance, unity, honesty, hard work, prudence, ethical values and dedication as essential traits for building strong bonds, shared responsibilities, and stable families that support their children's educational development in senior secondary schools.

Keywords: *Religious-Induced Interventions, Sustainable Educational Development, Disintegrated Families, South-South Nigeria.*

Introduction

The family as a societal structure plays a vital role in the level of morals, discipline, reformation, and training that is displayed by an individual towards societal development. The much-needed capacity of a societal structure to timely and effectively play roles that would culminate in sustainable educational and societal developments could be interrupted by the non-functionality and disintegration of the family (Oko-Jaja, 2020a). Family disintegration involves separation, conflict, or breakup between parents, leading to loss of unity, guidance, nurturing, and support essential for children's development and well-being within the household (Saikia, 2017). A disintegrated family fails in playing the sociological roles and

structures, which can affect the student family member from imbibing the level of self-reliance required to climax to attain sustainable educational development in Nigeria (Daminabo, 2021).

The disintegration of the family could impede the child's educational development for the acquisition of knowledge and values, against their exhibition of indiscipline and delinquent behaviours that would finally produce a weak and unstable society (Olaitan, 2018; Oko-Jaja, 2020b). The disintegration of a family can be likened to a social problem, known to erupt numerous issues and difficulties that can affect individuals, families, and society (Daminabo, 2016; Daminabo & Balogun, 2018). This underscores *Tepperman et al.* (2015) emphasis that tackling any social problem require integrating multidimensional processes, and range of strategies or approaches that would enable a person or household to effectively acquire, internalize and adjust personalized strategies likely to help them to understand and tackle the dynamics or undercurrents such as insecurity, poverty, divorce, health and malnutrition that can fragment a family.

The rising divorce, single parenting, and abandonment appear as variants of family instability that deprive students of support, leading to poor motivation, absenteeism, behavioural issues, and educational setbacks (Eke & Okoye, 2021). Family disintegration affects a family member's seamless participation in educational processes to acquire knowledge and skills to identify, innovate, and address issues likely impeding the attainment of sustainable social, economic, and educational development goals (Onyido, 2017). These scenarios thrive because schools lack psychosocial support systems, leaving students from broken homes vulnerable, resulting in poor performance and higher dropout rates (Otobo, 2023). In the absence of strong family support, many students face identity, discipline, and troubling issues, worsened by poverty, violence, and weak social welfare systems that hinder quality education (Ajayi & Owolabi, 2021).

The quest for realizing sustainable educational development underscores why Olanrewaju et al. (2018) advocated for the formulation of policies with strategies to integrate moral and religious teachings that can instill ethics, values, and behaviors in students or learners in educational institutions. Otobo (2023) observed that religious-induced interventions aid in providing psychosocial supports, instilling values, and teaching attitudes required for active life engagement and sustainable educational development, even for students from broken or vulnerable homes. Also, religion-induced interventions not only instill discipline but also provide safe spaces for emotional expression, peer interaction, and role modeling among others that are crucial for educational resilience (Okafor & Bello, 2021). Religion in Nigeria holds considerable authority in shaping values, attitudes, character, and behavioural outcomes that can sustain positive performance and outcomes in secondary schools (Johnson et al., 2020). Given this, Ajayi and Owolabi (2021) observed that in South-South Nigeria, churches and Islamic centers, including religious communities, serve as alternative social safety nets through initiatives such as weekend moral instruction classes, after-school tutoring, youth development workshops, and life-skills programmes to support students from unstable or disintegrated families.

Rising family disintegration, manifested in separation, divorce, abandonment, single-parenting, has eroded the social, emotional, and foundational support essential for secondary school students' academic development in Nigeria (Eke & Okoye, 2021). Also, disintegrated

families deny their student-family members vital psychosocial support and guidance needed for educational success in today's socio-economically unstable and culturally shifting society, where poverty, youth delinquency, and weak institutional responses, among other crises, persist (Atunde et al., 2022). In response to this crisis, religious organizations have increasingly stepped in as informal support systems through programmes such as mentorship, counseling, character education, scholarships, and spiritual rehabilitation needed by a student (Obisike & Nwauzi, 2019).

The apparent rise in faith-based youth engagement tends to propagate religious creed and moral instruction as interventions that influence students' academic commitment, school attendance, discipline, community development, and long-term aspirations (Uche & Nwachukwu, 2019). Given this, churches and mosques now provide or offer safe spaces, moral guidance, and spiritual teachings that help students from unstable families find emotional stability, purpose, and academic resilience (Adebayo & Oladipo, 2020). Hence, the effectiveness of these religious-induced interventions remains unclear without examining the socio-emotional experiences of students from disintegrated families and how religion-propelled values, teachings, and guidance can reshape their academic and socio-emotional challenges and needs (Okafor & Bello, 2021).

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that the family plays a key role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as reflected in public policies like child allowances and paternity leave to support future generations (UNICEF, 2018; UNESCO, 2018; 2020b). Thus, Nigeria's embrace of the SDGs will culminate in the achievement of sustainable educational development that fosters values, ethics, and human capacity within its secondary school system (Onyido, 2017). Thus, amid growing concerns and neglect from family instability, churches, mosques, and faith-based organizations provide mentorship, scholarships, counseling, and moral programmes to support youths from disintegrated families, offering emotional, spiritual, and educational stability (Adebayo & Oladipo, 2020). Research has shown that religious social capital boosts motivation, attendance, and achievement among students from broken homes through hope-filled teachings, mentorship, and scholarships, easing trauma and financial burdens (Uche & Nwachukwu, 2019). Yet, despite widespread religious interventions in South-South communities, little empirical evidence exists on their impact on holistic sustainable education, including emotional well-being and lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2020a). This is the crux of the study.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, South-South Nigeria has faced rising family disintegration, divorce, separation, hardship, and migration that significantly impact students' academic performance, emotional stability, and moral development. Students from such homes often grapple with issues like low self-esteem, lack of supervision, and absence of emotional support, all of which hamper their ability to engage in educational activities and achieve sustainable educational development fully. In response to this challenge, religious institutions and faith-based organizations have increasingly taken up intervention roles, offering counseling, mentorship, scholarships, moral instruction, and spiritual guidance aimed at mitigating the negative effects of family disintegration. These religious-induced interventions appear to provide a form of social and emotional scaffolding for affected students, enabling them to find hope, purpose,

and direction despite their unstable home environments. However, the effectiveness and long-term influence of these interventions on students' academic resilience and overall educational development remain insufficiently explored.

Despite their growing role in the educational ecosystem, there is a noticeable gap in empirical research that critically examines how religious-based efforts impact the sustainable educational development of students from broken homes. The absence of focused research creates a knowledge gap, limiting stakeholders' ability to effectively and rationally evaluate faith-based programmes, leading to fragmented, inconsistent, and potentially misaligned interventions for students from fractured homes. Without evidence-based understanding, educational planners and policymakers may overlook the potential of such interventions in supporting vulnerable student populations. Thus, there is an urgent need to investigate the extent to which religious-induced interventions contribute to or hinder the educational progression of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South Nigeria, to inform holistic and inclusive educational policies and support systems.

This prompted the articulation of the following questions that guided this research.

1. How do religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What is the difference in the mean rating of administrators, teachers, and students on the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria?

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to examine the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine how the religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the difference in the mean rating of administrators, teachers, and students on the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

1. The study would reveal how religious interventions effectively address the social, emotional, and moral challenges that hinder the educational development of students from disintegrated families in South-South Nigeria.
2. The study would inform educators, policymakers, and religious leaders on the effectiveness of faith-based programmes, enabling the development of better-targeted interventions for vulnerable secondary school students.
3. The research provides empirical evidence to guide education policy, integrating faith-based support into frameworks lacking adequate institutional response, and promoting school-religious collaboration.

4. The study emphasizes educational interventions supporting academic achievement, emotional stability, and values, aligning with global goals for sustainable, inclusive, and holistic learning environments.
5. The study expands scholarly discussion on religion, family breakdown, and education by offering evidence from South-South Nigeria, encouraging further research on community-based student support.

Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted the descriptive research design. Nwankwo (2016) noted that descriptive research design involves sampling a subgroup with shared characteristics and allowing the results to be generalized to the entire population.

Area of the Study: The study was conducted in Nigeria's South-South zone, comprising Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States. It shares borders with Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, Adamawa, Kogi, and Ondo States. In addition, the South-South zone comprises: Akwa Ibom (31 LGAs), Bayelsa (8), Cross River (18), Edo (18), Delta (25), and Rivers State, with 23, totaling 123 Local Government Areas. As of the 2006 census, South-South Nigeria had a population of 21.2 million. It is a multilingual, multi-ethnic zone, with major groups including Ijaw, Ikwerre, Itsekiri, Edo, Efik, Ibom, Urhobo, and Igbo, each dominant in specific states across the region. The South-South zone is rich in crude oil and gas exploration, including waterways, enabling it to host dense populations and vibrant industrial, commercial, and educational activities, making it a highly urbanized and industrialized region in Nigeria. In specificity, the South-South zone has 1,538 public senior secondary schools, which according to their respective State Education Boards 2021 report are distributed as follows: Akwa Ibom (237), Bayelsa (211), Cross River (255), Delta (293), Edo (264), and Rivers (278).

Population of the Study: The study population included 1,543 principals, 3,086 vice principals, 37,452 teachers, and 1,834,995 students across 1,543 public senior secondary schools in South-South Nigeria, totaling 1,877,076 persons. The principals, vice principals, teachers, and students were included for their knowledge and experience regarding how religious-induced interventions influence students' sustainable educational development in disintegrated families.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: A sample of 918 respondents (102 principals, 102 vice principals, 204 teachers, and 510 students) from 102 public senior secondary schools in South-South Nigeria participated, using a six-phase multistage sampling technique. Firstly, four of six states, namely Akwa Ibom, Delta, Bayelsa, and Rivers, were randomly selected, representing 66.7% of the geopolitical zone's state composition. In the second phase, proportionate stratified sampling selected 102 public senior secondary schools (about 10%) from Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States: 25, 20, 29, and 28 schools, respectively.

In the third phase, one principal was purposively selected from each school, for a total of the same number. Fourthly, one vice principal was randomly chosen from each school, also totaling 25 in Akwa Ibom, 20 in Bayelsa, 29 in Delta, and 28 in Rivers, maintaining proportional representation of the sampled states in the study. fifthly, random sampling was used to select 204 teachers (2 per school) from the 102 sampled schools. In the final phase, quota sampling assigned 5 students per school, totaling 510 students. This ensured even distribution across

Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States. Altogether, the study involved 102 principals, 102 vice principals, 204 teachers, and 510 students, totaling 918 respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a 24-item self-structured instrument titled “Religious-Induced Interventions and Sustainable Educational Development of Secondary School Students from Disintegrated Families Scale” (RISEDSSDFS). The RISEDSSDFS instrument had a four-point rating scale of: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, rated 4, 3, 2, and 1 points respectively. Also, the instrument had three sections: Section A elicited the respondents' demographics, Section B with 16 items for religious-induced interventions, and Section C with 8 items for sustainable educational development.

Validation of the Instrument: The face and content validity of the RISEDSSDFS instrument was assessed by the researcher's supervisor and two experts from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. They reviewed the topic, objectives, research questions, and questionnaire items for clarity, relevance, and readability. Their feedback was used to revise and improve the instrument's accuracy and alignment with the study's objectives.

Reliability of the Instrument: The reliability or internal consistency of the RISEDSSDFS instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha (r_a) method. A pilot study with 60 respondents (comprising 5 principals, 5 vice principals, 15 teachers, and 35 students) from five public senior secondary schools in Aba, Abia State (not included in the study) yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.917. This high internal consistency justified the instrument's use for the study's data collection.

Method of Data Collection: The data for this research were obtained from the primary and secondary sources. The secondary data source was obtained from textbooks, journals, articles, newspapers, magazines, lecture notes, internet materials/publications, and maps, among other sources. Conversely, the primary data were obtained through the RISEDSSDFS questionnaire administered to principals, vice principals, teachers, and students in selected public senior secondary schools in South-South Nigeria. Additionally, the face-to-face direct delivery technique was used for the collection of the primary data. This enabled the researcher and assistants to secure approval from principals of the 102 selected public senior secondary schools across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States. Out of the 918 copies of the serially numbered RISEDSSDFS instrument that were administered to the respondents, only 873 copies (representing approximately 95% return rate) were validly retrieved and subsequently used for the analysis in this study.

Method of Data Analysis: Data collected was coded and analyzed using mean and standard deviation, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to answer research questions 1 and 2, respectively.

Results

Research Question 1: How do religious-induced interventions influence sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Influence of religious-induced interventions on sustainable educational development of students from disintegrated families include:	Administrators N = 192		Teachers N = 193		Students N = 488		N = 873	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Group Mean	Decision
1	Preaching love and tolerance helps strengthen family unity	3.39	.65	3.42	.55	3.50	.49	3.45	SA
2	Emphasizing honesty and hard work among parents	3.61	.76	3.68	.59	3.66	.59	3.65	SA
3	Inculcating values that promote family stability and support	3.74	.44	3.71	.49	3.59	.51	3.65	SA
4	Encourage parents to engage in outings and bonding activities	3.65	.49	3.58	.53	3.54	.53	3.57	SA
5	Training parents on the prudent management of resources	3.68	.47	3.68	.48	3.61	.51	3.64	SA
6	Encouraging the sharing of responsibilities in the family	3.70	.46	3.64	.49	3.58	.51	3.62	SA
7	Organize pre-marriage classes and seminars to promote family stability	3.84	.36	3.78	.45	3.60	.52	3.69	SA
8	Often organizing interviews and counseling for parents	3.62	.54	3.58	.59	3.50	.60	3.54	SA
Grand Mean		3.65	0.52	3.63	0.52	3.57	0.53	3.60	SA

SA (Strongly Agree) = ≥ 2.50 while SD (Strongly Disagree) < 2.50.

Table 1 shows how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria. It further shows that, in item 1, the students with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.50) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.42) and the administrators (with $\bar{X}$ = 3.39) on preaching love, forgiveness, and tolerance that would help strengthen family unity, influenced sustainable educational development of secondary school students, in item 2, the teachers with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.68) had a higher mean score than students with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.66) and administrators with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.61) on emphasizing honesty and hard work among parents influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students, in item 3, the administrators with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.74) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.71) and students with ($\bar{X}$ = 3.59) on inculcating values that would help to promote family stability and support influenced sustainable

educational development of secondary school students, and in item 4, the administrators with ($\bar{X} = 3.65$) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X} = 3.58$) and students with ($\bar{X} = 3.54$) on encouraging parents to go for picnics, outings, tours, and activities that would strengthen their bonds, influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria.

Similarly, in item 5, the administrators and teachers (each with $\bar{X} = 3.68$) had a higher mean score than students with ($\bar{X} = 3.61$) on training parents on prudent management of resources influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students, in item 6, the administrators with ($\bar{X} = 3.70$) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X} = 3.64$) and students with ($\bar{X} = 3.58$) on encouraging sharing of responsibilities in the family influenced sustainable educational development of secondary school students, in item 7, the administrators with ($\bar{X} = 3.84$) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X} = 3.78$) and students with ($\bar{X} = 3.60$) on organizing pre-marriage classes and marriage seminars for couples to maintain a stable home environment influenced sustainable educational development of secondary school students, and in item 8, the administrators with ($\bar{X} = 3.62$) had a higher mean score than teachers with ($\bar{X} = 3.58$) and students with ($\bar{X} = 3.50$) on regularly organizing interviews and counseling for parents influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria.

Furthermore, the grand mean scores of 3.65, 3.63, and 3.57 indicate that the administrators, teachers, and students, respectively, responded on how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria. This indicated that administrators had a higher grand mean score, followed by teachers and students with the least grand mean score on how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria. Thus, the group mean column showed a grand mean score of 3.60, which indicated that religious-induced interventions strongly influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the mean rating of administrators, teachers, and students on the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the mean rating of administrators, teachers, and students on the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	1.132	2	.566	12.798	.000	S
Within Groups	38.464	870	.044			
Total	39.596	872				

Decision Rule: if $p < .05$ reject H_0 , else retain H_0 . NS= Not Significant, $p > .05$, S= significant, $p < .05$

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 2 shows that category of respondents (school administrators, teachers and students) significantly influenced their mean rating on the influence of religious-induced interventions on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria ($F_{2, 870}=.000$, $p<.05$). This indicated that the category of the respondents influenced their rating on the influence of religious-induced interventions for addressing family disintegration on sustainable development of secondary school students in South-South Geo-political zone of Nigeria (see Table 1). Hence, the religious-induced interventions influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The result in Table 1 revealed grand mean scores of 3.65, 3.63, and 3.57, which indicated the administrators, teachers and students respectively attested that: preaching love, forgiveness and tolerance that would help strengthen family unity, emphasizing honesty and hard-work among parents, inculcating values that would help to promote family stability and support, encouraging parents to go for picnic, outings, tours and activities that would strengthen their bonds, training parents on prudent management of resources, encouraging sharing of responsibilities in the family, organizing pre-marriage classes and marriage seminars for couples in order to maintain a stable home environment, and regularly organizing interviews and counseling for parents were how religious-induced interventions influenced the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria.

This finding is in agreement with the finding by Mustapha (2016) that religious-induced interventions help promote sustainable educational development of secondary school students through: preaching love, forgiveness and tolerance that would help strengthen family unity, emphasizing honesty and hard-work among parents, inculcating values. Also, Adebayo and Oladipo (2020) reiterated that religious interventions promote family stability and support, encouraging parents to go for picnic, outings, tours and activities that would strengthen their bonds, and training parents on prudent management of resources. This finding aligns with Okafor and Bello (2021) that religious interventions help: encourage sharing of responsibilities in the family, organize pre-marriage classes and marriage seminars for couples in order to maintain a stable home environment, and regularly organizing interviews and counseling for students especially those from disintegrated families where parents have existing issues.

Additionally, the grand mean scores of 3.65, 3.63, and 3.57 indicated that administrators had higher grand mean score, followed by teachers and students with the least grand mean score on how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria. However, the group grand mean score of 3.60 indicated that all the category of the respondents (school administrators, teachers and students) strongly agreed with the items (in items 1-8) on how religious-induced interventions for addressing family disintegration influenced sustainable development of secondary school students in South-South Geo-political zone of Nigeria. This finding is in consistent with the previous finding in the study by Mustapha (2016) that families adherence to religious values and principles would enable them to learn, possess and exhibit values, ethics, skills, knowledge and conducts that would help to effectively

position them in the role of transforming and inculcating the principles and morals that would guide and propel their exhibition of positive actions that would help to enhance educational and societal development. Also, this finding aligns with Samuolis and Lavrakas (2018) that religious initiatives enable school administrators, teachers and students who come from different families to exhibit appropriate skills, sound ethical acts, high-sense of rationality, high level obedience and make humane contributions that would effectively sustain the development of the family, community, schools and whole society in Nigeria.

The result in Table 2 revealed that the category of respondents (school administrators, teachers, and students) significantly influenced how religious-induced interventions influence the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in the South-South, Nigeria. This indicated that the category of the respondents influenced their mean rating on the influence of religious-induced interventions for addressing family disintegration on the sustainable educational development of secondary school students from disintegrated families in South-South, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with Obisike and Nwauzi (2019) that the consistency of religious bodies preaching love, forgiveness and tolerance as well as honesty, devotion and sacrifice that would help strengthen family unity, emphasizing honesty and hard-work among parents, inculcating values that would help to promote family stability and support thereby preventing the arousal of social problems.

The finding of this study that religious initiatives help instill values that guide and help students to refrain from deviance, cultism, school dropout, kidnapping, among other social problems, is very important. This standpoint agrees with the position of *Tepperman* et al. (2015) that tackling any social problem requires integrating multidimensional processes and a range of strategies, including religious initiatives. These religious initiatives enable a student to effectively acquire, internalize, and adjust individualized strategies likely to help him/her understand and tackle the undercurrents, such as poverty, divorce, health, and malnutrition that can fragment a family. Also, this finding agrees with the position of Obisike and Nwauzi (2019) that religious initiatives help to promote the institutionalization of peace and ethics education that emphasizes the students' acquisition of morals, skills, and knowledge to effectively resolve a myriad of challenges that would interfere with the goal of attaining sustainable development.

Conclusion

The study concludes that religious-induced interventions help to instill teachings, morals, and tolerance that strengthen family unity and self-esteem amid difficult life experiences and economic hardship, with the propensity to increase the student family member's exposure to social issues. Specifically, exposure and participation in any social issue like deviance, drug abuse, cultism, truancy, child labour, prostitution, etc., stirs family disintegration, which negatively influences the student family member's quest for attaining sustainable educational development, especially at the senior secondary school level. Consequently, regular counselling, tutoring, financial support, and promoting vocational skills like catering or phone repair can aid students facing challenges such as family disintegration to acquire social, mental, and psychological skills that position and enhance their chances of achieving sustainable educational development, especially at the senior secondary school level and beyond in South-South, Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. Religious organizations should conduct pre-marriage classes and marriage seminars that emphasize love, forgiveness, tolerance, unity, honesty, hard work, prudence, ethical values and dedication as essential traits for building strong bonds, shared responsibilities, and stable families that support their children's educational development in senior secondary schools.
2. The government should outlaw cultural and religious practices that tend to encourage extended families interfering with couples establishing a bond and developing an intimate relationship that would enable them to continuously remain sexually compatible, romantic, friendly, emotionally stable, and united even amid financial difficulties and material scarcity in their marriage.

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