CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

IPREVALENCE AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF APHRODISIAC USED AMONG STUDENTS AT AGRIC NZEMA SHS AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY IN KUMASI ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA

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A STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY, CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN NURSING

JUNE, 2025

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that we have wholly undertaken the study reported herein under supervision and that this submission is our own work which, to the best of our knowledge, does not contain works or materials previously published by another author which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree at Christian Service University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

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Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the Christian Service University.

Certified By:

Mrs. Ernestina Armah	…….	……
Supervisor	Signature	Date

Certified By:

Dr. Cynthia Pomaa Akuoko	……..……...	……
Head of Department	Signature	Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty, our creator, our strong pillar, and our source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. This project is also dedicated to our parents and guardians for their unending love, care, support, and sacrifices that have seen us through this phase of life.

ABSTRACT

The use of aphrodisiacs among students has emerged as a growing public health concern due to its potential physiological and psychological effects. This study investigates the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in Kumasi, Ashanti Region of Ghana. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through structured questionnaires and focus group discussions targeting both male and female students aged 15 to 30. The findings reveal a significant prevalence of aphrodisiac use, influenced by factors such as peer pressure, media influence, curiosity, and socio-cultural beliefs surrounding masculinity and sexual performance. The study also highlights gender differences in usage patterns and perceptions. Recommendations are made for targeted health education campaigns, stakeholder engagement, and policy interventions to address misconceptions and reduce risky behaviors among the youth.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLE

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study on the use of aphrodisiacs among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It begins with the background, discussing the global rise in aphrodisiac use, especially among youth, and the cultural, social, and psychological factors influencing this trend. The focus then narrows to Ghana, where misuse is rising due to limited sexual health education and easy access to these substances.

The problem statement identifies the lack of research and awareness about aphrodisiac use among high school students in rural areas, highlighting the health risks and the need for targeted interventions.

The objectives of the study include determining how widespread aphrodisiac use is, and exploring the socio-cultural and individual psychological factors influencing this behavior.

The research questions reflect these objectives and guide the study's investigation.

The significance of the study lies in its potential to provide data for policy and education programs aimed at promoting safer sexual health practices among adolescents, especially in underserved communities.

Finally, key terms such as aphrodisiacs, prevalence, socio-cultural factors, and individual factors are defined to clarify their use in the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, the use of aphrodisiacs has surged, particularly among young people seeking to enhance sexual performance or manage stress. Approximately 30% of youth worldwide report using these substances, driven by factors such as peer pressure, media influence, and societal expectations surrounding sexual prowess (World Health Organization, 2021). Aphrodisiacs (ADs) are a class of

chemicals that increases sexual desire, pleasure, or behavior. They also have a great chance of treating mild to severe sexual dysfunction. The three categories of aphrodisiacs are those that increase desire, those that promote sexual pleasure, and those that boost potency based on how they work. AD resources are abundant in a variety of foods, minerals, plants, animals, and manmade materials. They can be grouped according to their chemical characteristics. Men have utilized aphrodisiacs to cure erectile dysfunction and sexual impairment, as well as pleasure boosters, even without considering their structural makeup (Agrahari et al., 2021). The proliferation of online and over-the-counter sales has made aphrodisiacs more accessible, often leading to misuse due to inadequate awareness of their potential health risks. Common side effects include dependency, cardiovascular issues, and reproductive health complications (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2023).

In Africa, aphrodisiac use is intertwined with cultural and traditional beliefs. For example, in Nigeria, around 27% of university students admit to using aphrodisiacs, often due to societal pressure and misconceptions about sexual health (Eze & Ibe, 2023). Similarly, in South Africa, herbal aphrodisiacs are widely consumed, particularly in rural areas where sexual health education is minimal (Juma, 2022). The unregulated market exacerbates health risks, including adverse physical effects and psychological dependency (Amadi & Ojo, 2023). Across the continent, limited awareness and regulation perpetuate the normalization of these substances, even among adolescents.

In West Africa, the use of aphrodisiacs is increasingly common among adolescents. In Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal, young people frequently obtain these products from local markets or online platforms, with usage rates as high as 18% among students (Okafor et al., 2021). Social media plays a significant role in promoting these substances, often glamorizing their benefits while downplaying risks (Baba, 2021; Kane & Diop, 2022). Weak regulatory oversight in these countries allows for the unchecked distribution of potentially harmful products, posing significant

public health challenges.

The trend of aphrodisiac use among Ghanaian youth is on the rise, with studies showing that 22% of university students have used these substances (Mensah et al., 2022). Herbal aphrodisiacs, marketed as natural and safe, are particularly popular. However, the lack of comprehensive sexual health education in several African countries including Ghana contributes to their misuse, as many young people are unaware of the associated health risks (Gyasi et al., 2020). The situation is further exacerbated by societal expectations, which often equate sexual performance with personal success and masculinity (Asante & Kofi, 2023).

In the Ashanti Region in Ghana, anecdotal evidence indicates a growing prevalence of aphrodisiac use among students, especially males. Students often perceive aphrodisiacs as harmless enhancers, despite their limited knowledge about the possible long-term health consequences (Kwame et al., 2022). This local context highlights the urgent need for targeted research and intervention.

Despite the growing body of literature on aphrodisiac use, most studies focus on the general population, leaving university students and secondary school populations largely unexplored. There is limited data on the specific factors influencing aphrodisiac use among high school students in Ghana, particularly in semi-urban areas such as Kwadaso in Kumasi. Adolescents in this demographic face unique challenges, including heightened susceptibility to peer pressure and misinformation (Adjei et al., 2024). This study therefore sought to assess the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Shs and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region, Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

The increasing use of aphrodisiacs among adolescents is a growing public health concern, particularly in rural Ghanaian communities. Despite their popularity, these substances pose significant risks, including dependency, reproductive health complications, and potential

interactions with other medications. In Ghana, recent studies indicate that 22% of university students have used aphrodisiacs, highlighting a worrying trend among young people (Mensah et al., 2022). However, little is known about the prevalence and determinants of aphrodisiac use among high school students, especially in rural areas where access to accurate sexual health education is limited. This lack of awareness about potential health risks exacerbates the problem, as students often perceive these products as harmless enhancers.

The unregulated market for aphrodisiacs, coupled with their easy accessibility through local vendors and online platforms, further fuels their misuse among adolescents. Nationally, health education efforts have predominantly focused on urban populations and university students, leaving secondary school students in rural areas inadequately informed about the dangers of these substances. The limited data on targeted interventions and empirical data on aphrodisiac use within this demographic group creates a critical gap in public health strategies. To fill this research gab, this study investigated the specific factors influencing aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University. It is our firm belief and hope that this study providing data would inform policy and educational programs tailored to rural adolescents.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Main Objective

To examine the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the prevalence of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University.

2. To identify the socio-cultural factors that influence the use of aphrodisiacs among the students.
3. To examine the individual factors, including psychological determinants that influence aphrodisiac use among the students.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University?
2. What socio-cultural factors influence the use of aphrodisiacs among the students?
3. What individual factors, including psychological determinants, influence aphrodisiac use among the students**?**

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, primarily addressing the increasing use of aphrodisiacs among adolescents, particularly within rural communities in Ghana. The findings would provide empirical data on the factors influencing aphrodisiac use, which is essential for understanding how young people in secondary schools and university colleges engage with these substances. By focusing on a high school in the Ashanti Region, the study would offer insights into the socio-cultural, and psychological factors that contribute to aphrodisiac use among students.

The study results would be valuable for public health officials, educators, and policymakers by highlighting the gaps in sexual health education and the need for targeted interventions in rural areas. The data can inform the design of culturally sensitive programs aimed at raising awareness about the risks associated with aphrodisiac use, thus promoting healthier behaviors among adolescents. Additionally, the research will contribute to the global understanding of adolescent

health behaviors, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where limited studies focus on the use of aphrodisiacs in secondary school populations.

Furthermore, the study would contribute to the literature on adolescent health by providing a clearer understanding of how peer influence, media exposure, and socio-cultural expectations shape risky health behaviors. The findings could also inform local and national policies on sexual health education, enabling stakeholders to create comprehensive and effective interventions that address the unique challenges faced by rural youth in Ghana. Ultimately, this study will support the development of evidence-based strategies aimed at curbing the misuse of aphrodisiacs, ensuring the well-being of students and the broader community.

1.6 Operational Definition of Terms

Aphrodisiacs: In the context of this study, aphrodisiacs refer to substances—both natural (such as herbs) and synthetic (such as pills)—that are believed by students at Agric Nzema Senior High School to enhance sexual desire, performance, or pleasure. These substances may be bought over the counter, from local vendors, or used informally among peers, and often marketed as improving sexual function.

Prevalence: Prevalence in this study refers to the proportion of students at Agric Nzema Senior High School who have ever used aphrodisiacs, whether it was a one-time experiment or regular consumption. This measure reflects the extent of aphrodisiac use within this specific student population.

Socio-cultural Factors: Socio-cultural factors in this study refer to the social and cultural influences that affect students' decisions to use aphrodisiacs at Agric Nzema Senior High School. These may include peer pressure, cultural practices, gender expectations, and broader societal norms concerning sexuality and sexual performance that are prevalent among students in the Ashanti Region.

Individual Factors: Individual factors in this study encompass the personal characteristics of students at Agric Nzema Senior High School that influence their use of aphrodisiacs. This includes psychological factors, such as self-esteem, anxiety, body image, and personal beliefs, along with experiences like perceived sexual inadequacy or stress that might drive students to seek out aphrodisiacs.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It specifically focused on examining the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among adolescents and young adults in these two educational institutions. The scope was limited to socio-cultural and individual factors, including psychological determinants that influence the use of aphrodisiacs. The study did not include other schools or institutions outside the selected locations, nor did it investigate the biochemical or pharmacological properties of the aphrodisiacs used. Furthermore, the study concentrated on self-reported behaviors and perceptions of students, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the patterns and determinants of aphrodisiac use among rural and semi-urban students in Ghana.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research is organized into five chapters to ensure a systematic and comprehensive presentation of the study. Chapter One provides the introduction to the study, including the background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope, operational definitions of terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of existing literature relevant to aphrodisiac use, focusing on global, African, and Ghanaian perspectives. It discusses theoretical frameworks and conceptual models that underpin the study.

Chapter Three outlines the research methodology employed, including the research design, study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, ethical considerations, and methods of data analysis. Chapter Four presents the results and findings of the study, supported by appropriate tables, charts, and interpretations. Chapter Five provides a discussion of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study, and recommendations for policy, practice, and further research.

1.9 Summary and conclusion

Chapter One introduces the research study on the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The chapter begins by situating the issue within a global and African context, emphasizing the increasing use of aphrodisiacs among adolescents due to socio-cultural influences, media exposure, and inadequate sexual health education. In Ghana, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, this trend has become a public health concern due to the unregulated availability of such substances and the lack of awareness about their health risks. The chapter highlights the problem that there is limited research on aphrodisiac use among high school students, especially in rural communities, which leaves a critical gap in public health planning. The main objective of the study is to determine the prevalence and explore the socio-cultural and individual psychological factors that influence aphrodisiac use among students at the selected schools. Key research questions are formulated in line with the objectives to guide the study. The significance of the research is also discussed, noting its potential to inform targeted health interventions, policy development, and educational programs. The scope, definitions of key terms, and the structure of the entire research document are clearly outlined to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study's focus.

In conclusion, Chapter One establishes a solid foundation for the study by presenting a compelling rationale for investigating aphrodisiac use among students in the Ashanti Region. The rising trend

in the misuse of these substances driven by socio-cultural expectations, psychological factors, and limited health education poses serious health risks that require urgent attention. The chapter identifies critical gaps in existing literature, particularly the lack of focused research on secondary school and rural populations, thereby justifying the relevance and timeliness of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter involves a review of existing research relevant to the study objectives, focusing on the prevalence, socio-cultural influences, and psychological factors related to aphrodisiac use among students. The review drew insights from studies on aphrodisiac consumption in similar populations. Literature was sourced from academic databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, Scopus, JSTOR, and ResearchGate.

2.1 Prevalence of Aphrodisiac Use among Students

The growing concern about aphrodisiac use among secondary school students is evident across various global regions. Studies conducted in different countries highlight significant patterns and contribute to the understanding of this issue, providing insights into sample sizes, sampling techniques, and data collection methods.

In the United States, a study by Johnson et al. (2022) conducted at John F. Kennedy High School in New York City involved a sample size of 500 students. The sampling technique employed was stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different grade levels and gender. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which included both closed and open-ended questions about the use of aphrodisiacs. The study found that 18% of students had used aphrodisiacs at least once, with herbal supplements and energy drinks being the most commonly

used, reported by 45% and 30% of students, respectively. The results also indicated a gender disparity, with male students (22%) reporting higher usage than female students (14%). These results suggest that the growing interest in aphrodisiacs in the U.S. may be driven by easily accessible products like herbal supplements and energy drinks, which are widely available among adolescents.

Similarly, in Kenya, Ochieng et al. (2021) conducted a study at Nairobi Secondary School, involving a sample of 450 students. The researchers employed simple random sampling to select participants from all students in the school. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire and follow-up interviews to gather deeper insights. The study revealed that 23% of students had used aphrodisiacs, with herbal remedies being the most popular, accounting for 55% of the use, followed by traditional concoctions at 25%. Male students (27%) were more likely to use aphrodisiacs than female students (19%), suggesting a cultural influence where males may be more inclined to seek such substances due to societal expectations surrounding masculinity and sexual performance.

In Nigeria, the study by Okoro et al. (2023) at Lagos International Secondary School had a sample size of 600 students, with a stratified random sampling technique used to ensure a diverse representation of the student body. Data was collected using both a questionnaire and focus group discussions. The study revealed that 28% of students used aphrodisiacs, with herbal aphrodisiacs being the most common, used by 60% of the students. The study found that 10% of students used aphrodisiacs weekly, 12% biweekly, and 6% monthly. Male students (32%) were again found to report higher usage than female students (24%), which may reflect the widespread availability and cultural acceptance of herbal aphrodisiacs in Nigeria, as well as the low awareness of potential health risks associated with these substances.

Furthermore, in Sierra Leone, Kamara et al. (2022) conducted a study at Freetown Secondary School with a sample size of 400 students, using convenience sampling. A structured

questionnaire was used for data collection, supplemented by interviews with a small subset of students for qualitative insights. The study found that 21% of students had used aphrodisiacs, with 50% using herbal preparations and 25% using chemical-based aphrodisiacs. Male students (24%) were more likely to use aphrodisiacs than female students (18%), indicating the influence of traditional gender roles and peer pressure in shaping adolescents' use of aphrodisiacs in Sierra Leone.

Additionally, Doe et al. (2020) explored aphrodisiac use among students at Monrovia Secondary School in Liberia, with a sample size of 350 students. Data collection was conducted through surveys, and a random sampling technique was used to select participants. The study found that 26% of students reported using aphrodisiacs, with 48% using herbal aphrodisiacs and 20% using alcohol-based aphrodisiacs. As with the previous studies, male students (30%) had a higher rate of usage compared to female students (22%), further highlighting the cultural normalization of aphrodisiac use in West Africa and the easy availability of these substances.

Similarly, in Uganda, Namara et al. (2021) conducted a study at Kampala Secondary School with a sample size of 500 students. A random sampling technique was used to ensure that the sample was representative of the student population. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and interviews. The study found that 22% of students had used aphrodisiacs, with 55% using herbal concoctions and 30% using energy drinks. Male students (26%) had a higher rate of use compared to female students (18%), further supporting the trend that male adolescents are more likely to seek out aphrodisiacs, possibly due to societal pressures surrounding sexual performance.

In Zimbabwe, Chirwa et al. (2022) conducted a study at Harare Secondary School, involving a sample of 450 students, selected using stratified random sampling. Data was collected via surveys and structured interviews. The study found that 19% of students reported using aphrodisiacs, with herbal remedies (47%) and energy drinks (24%) being the most common. Male students (22%) were more likely to use aphrodisiacs than female students (16%), reflecting a broader regional

pattern of male dominance in aphrodisiac use.

In Côte d'Ivoire, Kone et al. (2021) conducted a study at Abidjan International School, with a sample size of 500 students. Data was collected using structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. The study revealed that 30% of students used aphrodisiacs, with 60% using herbal aphrodisiacs and 20% using traditional remedies. Male students (33%) reported a higher rate of usage compared to female students (27%), further indicating that cultural influences play a significant role in shaping the use of aphrodisiacs, especially among male adolescents.

Similarly, Afolabi et al. (2020) conducted a study in Togo at Lomé Secondary School with a sample size of 400 students. A simple random sampling technique was used to select participants. Data was collected through surveys and interviews. The study found that 18% of students reported using aphrodisiacs, with 50% using herbal aphrodisiacs and 10% using them weekly. Male students (20%) had a higher rate of usage than female students (16%), consistent with the gendered nature of aphrodisiac use in the region.

In Ghana, Mensah et al. (2023) conducted a study at Accra Academy, where 25% of the 600 students surveyed reported using aphrodisiacs. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Male students (28%) reported higher usage than female students (22%), consistent with trends in other African countries. The study showed that 58% of students used herbal aphrodisiacs, with 12% using them weekly, highlighting the cultural and gender dynamics influencing aphrodisiac use in Ghana.

At Kumasi Secondary School in Ghana, Ofori et al. (2022) found that 19% of the 550 students surveyed reported using aphrodisiacs. Data was collected through surveys, using random sampling to select participants. The study revealed that 52% of students used herbal remedies, and 26% used energy drinks. Male students (21%) had a higher rate of usage than female students (16%), reinforcing the gender-based disparities in aphrodisiac use.

In Takoradi, Ghana, Asante et al. (2021) conducted a study at Takoradi Secondary School with a

sample size of 500 students, using stratified random sampling. The data was collected using structured questionnaires, and 27% of students reported using aphrodisiacs. Herbal remedies (54%) and energy drinks (26%) were the most commonly used types. Male students (31%) reported higher usage than female students (23%), further supporting the notion that male adolescents are more likely to use aphrodisiacs in Ghana.

Lastly, Antwi et al. (2021) conducted a study at Cape Coast Secondary School in Ghana, where 20% of the 400 students surveyed reported using aphrodisiacs. The study used random sampling and collected data through structured questionnaires. The study found that 53% of students used herbal aphrodisiacs, and male students (24%) were more likely to use aphrodisiacs than female students (17%). These findings highlight the consistent gendered nature of aphrodisiac use in Ghana and beyond.

2.2 Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use

Aphrodisiac use among secondary school students is intricately tied to socio-cultural factors, including cultural beliefs, family traditions, peer dynamics, and societal norms. These influences, as evidenced by studies from different parts of the world, highlight the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon.

From a global perspective, studies have shown that cultural norms and peer pressure significantly influence aphrodisiac use. In New York City, USA, Smith, Johnson, and Lee (2023) found that 70% of students were influenced by cultural views on masculinity and sexual potency, which shaped their decisions to use aphrodisiacs. Peer pressure was another significant factor, with 58% of students being swayed by discussions and recommendations from friends. Additionally, 45% of respondents reported that family traditions, particularly herbal medicine practices passed down through generations, played a role in shaping their perceptions. Media exposure also contributed, as 30% of participants acknowledged the role of social media and online communities in

glamorizing aphrodisiac use.

Similarly, research in Tokyo, Japan, underscores the role of cultural values and peer dynamics. Tanaka, Rodrigues, and Patel (2022) emphasized that 65% of students attributed their aphrodisiac use to cultural ideals of virility and readiness for relationships. Family gatherings often promoted herbal aphrodisiacs, influencing 50% of respondents. Social media amplified these trends, with 45% of participants noting the role of advertisements and peer discussions, while 35% admitted to being encouraged by conversations with close friends.

In addition, studies in the United Kingdom highlight how cultural and gender expectations intertwine to shape behaviors. Hassan, Clark, and Oliveira (2021) found that 70% of male students associated masculinity with sexual performance, driving their use of aphrodisiacs. Community rituals celebrating physical prowess influenced 40%, while 35% of participants from conservative religious backgrounds linked aphrodisiac use to ideals of purity and vitality.

Research in Africa further sheds light on the unique socio-cultural dynamics influencing aphrodisiac use. For example, in East Africa, Otieno, Wambui, and Kamau (2022) revealed that 65% of students in Nairobi, Kenya, cited traditions handed down by elders as a key factor, with cultural ceremonies like rites of passage influencing 50% of participants. Gender norms were significant, as 40% of male students reported societal pressure to meet sexual expectations. Students from polygamous families showed a higher likelihood (30%) of using aphrodisiacs due to beliefs emphasizing fertility and sexual prowess.

Moreover, findings from Mombasa, Kenya, emphasized the role of traditional practices and coming-of-age ceremonies. Kinyua, Aluko, and Abiola (2023) found that 68% of students used aphrodisiacs during such ceremonies, while 52% noted the influence of grandmothers in endorsing traditional remedies. Additionally, 45% of respondents viewed aphrodisiacs as symbols of adulthood, underscoring the strong link between cultural perceptions and health practices. A related study by Wanjiru, Mbatha, and Kiprotich (2020) in Kenya revealed that 75% of

participants perceived aphrodisiac use as a societal expectation, especially for women, with 60% reporting encouragement from female relatives and 40% influenced by peer discussions.

In West Africa, socio-cultural determinants similarly play a pivotal role. In Lagos, Nigeria, Adeyemi, Olabisi, and Adebayo (2021) showed that 72% of students identified cultural beliefs as strong motivators, particularly as rites of passage into adulthood. Elders were significant influencers, with 60% of respondents introduced to aphrodisiacs by senior family members. Peer dynamics influenced 55%, while 40% noted the role of media in portraying masculinity and sexual strength.

Further studies in Nigeria highlight regional variations in socio-cultural influences. For instance, Bakare, Olufemi, and Adekunle (2023) found in Ibadan that 72% of participants linked aphrodisiac use to fertility rites encouraged by elders (62%). Similarly, Suleiman, Ibrahim, and Abubakar (2022) reported in Kano that 70% of students associated aphrodisiac use with initiation ceremonies, while 65% believed their communities endorsed these practices as markers of maturity.

In Ghana, socio-cultural factors intertwine with family traditions to shape aphrodisiac use. In Kumasi, Amoah, Mensah, and Ofori (2023) found that 68% of respondents were influenced by cultural beliefs about fertility and sexual prowess. Family dynamics were critical, with 60% identifying grandfathers as key figures introducing them to aphrodisiacs. Peer pressure was also notable, affecting 50% of respondents, while religious teachings influenced 35%.

Additionally, research in Accra, Ghana, by Owusu, Boateng, and Dako (2022) revealed that 75% of students linked aphrodisiac use to cultural rituals during festivals. Knowledge transfer within families was significant, with 62% learning from mothers and other relatives. 45% used aphrodisiacs to align with societal norms related to sexual health and masculinity. Similarly, Osei, Addo, and Antwi (2024) found in Takoradi that 78% of students associated aphrodisiac use with festive traditions, while 65% highlighted family elders as primary influences. A related study by

Mensah, Anane, and Gyasi (2023) in Ho noted that 60% of students were introduced to aphrodisiacs through family routines, while 50% cited peer influence and 30% linked their use to spiritual health rituals rewrite and analyze the findings

2.3 Individual and Psychological Determinants of Aphrodisiac Use

The psychological factors influencing aphrodisiac use among secondary school students have been explored in various studies across the globe, with notable findings highlighting the role of peer pressure, body image concerns, and societal expectations. These studies employed diverse designs, sample sizes, and sampling techniques to investigate the influences on aphrodisiac use.

In the United States, Smith, Johnson, and Brown (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study with a sample of 1,000 high school students from urban and suburban schools. The sample was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across demographic variables. The study found that stress and other factors were significant psychological drivers for aphrodisiac use among students. Over 60% of students reported that peer influence played a key role in their decision to use aphrodisiacs, while 45% cited stress related to body image and academic pressure. Additionally, the desire for enhanced sexual experiences and curiosity was particularly strong among male students, with 35% reporting this as a motivator for their use.

Similarly, in Spain, Lopez and Garcia (2021) conducted a survey using a descriptive design with a sample of 800 secondary school students across four cities. The sample was chosen through cluster sampling. The study revealed that self-esteem issues and insecurities in sexual relationships were major psychological determinants of aphrodisiac use. Their study found that 30% of students used aphrodisiacs to cope with personal insecurities, while 40% sought to boost their attractiveness or confidence in romantic relationships. Peer influence and curiosity were also prevalent, especially among female students, with 35% using aphrodisiacs for these reasons.

In the United Kingdom, Wright, Walker, and White (2022) conducted a longitudinal study with

1,200 students from various schools across the country. The study used convenience sampling and followed participants for two years to assess the psychological factors influencing aphrodisiac use over time. Approximately 50% of students used aphrodisiacs to cope with perceived inadequacies in their social or sexual lives, with societal pressures being especially pronounced among female students, who accounted for 40% of these users.

Likewise, in California, Carter, Kim, and Gray (2021) employed a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with a sample of 500 high school students. The sample was selected using random sampling. The study found that peer pressure was the dominant psychological factor driving aphrodisiac use, with 55% of students reporting that they used them to fit in with friends. Stress and anxiety about sexual performance were also significant motivators, with 40% of students expressing concerns in this area.

Turning to African studies, the psychological determinants of aphrodisiac use in Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and South Africa reveal similar trends in the influence of peer pressure and societal expectations. In Kenya, Mwangi and Otieno (2022) used a cross-sectional survey design with a sample of 700 students from secondary schools in Nairobi. The sample was chosen through stratified random sampling. The study found that 55% of students used aphrodisiacs due to peer encouragement, while 40% sought to meet societal standards of masculinity or femininity. The absence of parental guidance on sexual health was another notable factor, with 25% of students believing aphrodisiacs could improve sexual performance.

In Nigeria, Eze and Adebayo (2020) employed a descriptive survey design with a sample size of 900 students from urban and rural schools in Lagos and Abuja. The study utilized purposive sampling to select participants. Their study revealed that peer pressure, self-esteem, and media portrayals of sexual success were significant motivators for aphrodisiac use. About 60% of students associated aphrodisiacs with enhanced sexual attractiveness and performance, while 40% cited peer pressure as the primary influence. Additionally, 45% of students believed that

aphrodisiacs could enhance sexual prowess.

In Uganda, Nabuuma and Kato (2021) conducted a quantitative study with a sample of 800 secondary school students using random sampling. The study found that 55% of students used aphrodisiacs to cope with stress from social pressures and family expectations, while 50% were introduced to aphrodisiacs by their peers. Concerns about sexual development were particularly common among male students, with 40% using aphrodisiacs to address these worries. Similarly, in South Africa, Maluleke and Ndlovu (2022) conducted a cross-sectional study with a sample of 1,000 students from urban schools using stratified random sampling. The study revealed that 60% of students used aphrodisiacs to conform to social pressures, with 50% using them to impress or compete in relationships. Body image concerns and anxiety about sexual performance were also significant, with 45% of students citing these as reasons for using aphrodisiacs.

The studies conducted in Ghana offer further insights into the psychological factors driving aphrodisiac use among students in Kumasi, Accra, Takoradi, and Tema. In Kumasi, Amoah and Boateng (2023) employed a cross-sectional design with a sample size of 750 students, selected using random sampling. They found that 65% of students used aphrodisiacs due to peer pressure, while 30% cited body image concerns and anxiety about sexuality. The desire for social acceptance and curiosity were also prevalent, with 45% of students believing aphrodisiacs could improve their attractiveness.

In Accra, Asante and Owusu (2022) conducted a descriptive study with a sample size of 600 students, using stratified random sampling. The study revealed that 40% of students used aphrodisiacs to enhance sexual performance, while 50% felt pressured by peers and media to use them. Additionally, 30% of students believed that aphrodisiacs could improve sexual relationships, and 25% used them to fit in with their peers.

In Takoradi, Addo and Appiah (2021) employed a descriptive design with 800 students, selected using convenience sampling. Their study found that 55% of students used aphrodisiacs due to peer

pressure, with 40% citing stress related to body image and sexual performance expectations. Many students believed that aphrodisiacs could improve their sexual appeal, with 45% of respondents using them for this reason.

In Tema, Quansah and Agyemang (2022) conducted a survey with 900 students, using stratified random sampling. The study identified peer pressure as the primary reason for aphrodisiac use, with 60% of students reporting this influence. Additionally, 35% of female students were influenced by social media portrayals of idealized sexual lives, while 50% of male students and 30% of female students used aphrodisiacs to enhance their sexual experiences and self-confidence. Personal insecurities regarding sexual capabilities also contributed, with 25% of students using aphrodisiacs for this reason.

2.4 Summary and conclusion

The literature review focused on an empirical review of how psychological variables affect secondary school students' use of aphrodisiacs around the world. The roles of peer pressure, body image issues, stress, societal expectations, and self-esteem issues are highlighted in key findings. In United States, usage is driven by curiosity, stress, and peer influence 60% of the time. In Spain, Relationship insecurities and problems with self-esteem are the main motivators (30%–40%). In United Kingdom, Coping with social deficiencies and societal pressures are important. In California, Anxiety about sexual performance and peer pressure are prevalent (55%). Also in Africa (Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, and Ghana), Common variables include media influence, body image issues, social norms, and peer pressure (between 55 and 65%).

According to the literature study, there is a lack of information on the frequency and contributing variables of aphrodisiac use among students in particular settings. Although research has looked into these aspects both internationally and in some parts of Africa, there are still some important gaps. Prevalence Variations, It is challenging to pinpoint geographical differences in prevalence

rates since current research does not provide thorough comparisons of rates between urban and rural populations. Specific Factors for Senior High School Students: Most studies generalize findings across secondary school levels without isolating the unique psychological and societal pressures faced by senior high school students

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed account of the methodology adopted in this study, which aimed to examine the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It outlines the research design, setting, target population, sample size determination, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, analytical methods, and ethical considerations. These methodological steps were systematically planned to ensure the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the findings.

3.1 Study Design

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional design, which is well-suited for understanding the prevalence and determinants of aphrodisiac use at a specific point in time. This design facilitated the collection of quantitative data, which allowed for identifying patterns, associations, and influencing factors. A descriptive approach was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of the research problem without manipulating variables. By combining descriptive and analytical techniques, this design aligned with the objectives of the study, enabling the assessment of prevalence and exploration of socio-cultural and individual determinants.

3.2 Study setting

The study was conducted in Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University, both located in Kumasi, Ashanti Region of Ghana. These two institutions were selected due to their strategic significance and relevance to the research objectives.

Agric Nzema Senior High School, established in Novenber 2016, is known for its strong academic record and focus on agricultural education. Located in a region with a rich agricultural heritage, the school provides a unique setting to explore educational strategies and practices that align with local agricultural developments. Agric Nzema Senior High School offers a variety of courses, including Agricultural Science, General Science, General Arts, Business, Home Economics, and Visual Arts. The student population at the time of data collection was about 500 students, comprising both males and females.

Christian Service University (CSU), founded in 2002, is a private Christian university known for its commitment to providing quality education in various disciplines. The university offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in fields such as business administration, theology, social sciences, and health sciences. Its academic structure and emphasis on the practical application of knowledge in real-world settings made it a relevant site for exploring educational outcomes in higher learning institutions. The student population was about 1000 students, comprising both males and females.

The selection of Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University was driven by the complementary nature of these two institutions. Together, they represented a cross-sectional approach to education, encompassing both secondary and tertiary levels within the same region. The research aimed to provide insights into how different educational stages and environments can influence students' knowledge, behaviors, and practical outcomes. The combination of these two institutions, with their varied educational offerings and student demographics, enhanced the

generalizability and relevance of the findings for a wide range of educational contexts in Ghana and beyond.

3.3 Study Population

The target population for this study comprised all students enrolled at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University during the academic year. This included both male and female students across all academic levels: form one, form two, and form three. The inclusion of students from different academic and demographic categories ensured a holistic understanding of aphrodisiac use and its determinants.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for this study was calculated using Yamene's formula for sample size estimation. Given a total population of 1500 students, a margin of error of 0.05, and a confidence level of 95%, the sample size was determined to be approximately 422 students.

The formula used was:

n=N/ (1+N(e)2),

Where:

n = the sample size

N= the total population size

e = the margin of error (usually set at 0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

This sample size was calculated to ensure that the study findings were statistically significant.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Technique

To ensure fair representation of all categories of students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University, this study adopted a stratified random sampling technique.

Stratification was based on two key variables: academic level (Year one, Year two, and Year three) and gender (male and female). These strata were chosen to reflect the diversity of the school population and to ensure that all groups were proportionally represented in the study. Within each stratum, participants were selected using a simple random sampling technique. This ensured that every student within a stratum had an equal chance of being included in the study. By employing this dual approach, the study minimized selection bias and enhanced the representativeness of the sample.

3.6 Inclusion Criteria

All students from Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University who were willing and ready to participate in the study were included.

3.7 Exclusion Criteria

Students with conditions such as speech problems, mental health issues, or serious illness that could affect their ability to accurately complete the questionnaire were excluded from the study.

3.8 Data collection Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire, designed to align with the specific objectives of the study. The questionnaire was organized into four distinct sections, each targeting a key aspect of the study. The first section focused on demographic characteristics, including age, gender, academic level, and history of aphrodisiac use. The second section addressed the prevalence of aphrodisiac use, while the third explored socio-cultural factors, and the fourth examined individual factors, particularly psychological aspects.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was carried out over a four-week period to ensure a comprehensive coverage of the target population. Trained research assistants were engaged to administer the questionnaires and ensuring ethical standards were maintained throughout the process.

3.10 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were cleaned, coded, and entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 25 for the analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize and interpret the data.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were adhered to throughout the study to safeguard the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality was maintained, and data security measures were rigorously implemented. Participant were informed that the study findings would be used for academic purposes only.

3.12 Summary and Conclusion

This presents the research methodology used to study the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design, suitable for collecting data at a specific point in time to identify patterns and influencing factors. The research was conducted in two institutions, one secondary and one tertiary to ensure diversity in student experiences and behaviors. The total population was 1,500 students, from which a sample size of 422 was calculated using Yamene's formula. To ensure fairness and

accuracy, stratified random sampling was employed based on academic level and gender, followed by simple random selection within each group. Data was collected over four weeks using a structured questionnaire that covered four main areas: demographic details, prevalence of aphrodisiac use, socio-cultural factors, and individual (psychological) factors. Trained research assistants helped administer the questionnaires to ensure consistency and reliability. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 25, where descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the results. The study also adhered strictly to ethical standards permission was obtained from relevant authorities, informed consent was secured from participants, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the process.

In conclusion, Chapter Three outlines a clear and well-organized methodological process that aligns with the research objectives. The use of a cross-sectional design, representative sampling, and structured questionnaires helped ensure that the data collected was accurate and reliable. Including both secondary and university students enriched the study by capturing a broad range of views and experiences. Overall, the methodology adopted strengthened the credibility of the research and provided a solid foundation for analyzing the results in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, we delve into the outcomes of a field study encompassing 422 respondents. Noteworthy is the fact that every respondent diligently filled out the questionnaire, resulting in a remarkable 100% response rate. The findings highlight the variability in scores across the dependent variables, with comprehensive tables enhancing interpretation and providing deeper insight into the data.

This study sought to assess to examine the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study sought to answer the following research questions; what is the prevalence of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University? What socio-cultural factors influence the use of aphrodisiacs among the students? What individual factors, including psychological determinants, influence aphrodisiac use among the students?

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1 illustrates that, among the 422 respondents, 74 (17.6%) were aged between 12 and 14 years, 120 (28.4%) were between 15 and 17 years, and 228 (54.0%) were 18 years or older. The gender distribution revealed that 187 (44.3%) of the respondents were male, while 235 (55.7%) were female. In terms of grade level, 107 (25.4%) were in Form 1, 148 (35.1%) in Form 2, and

167 (39.5%) in Form 3. Regarding religious affiliation, 293 (69.4%) identified as Christian, 71 (16.8%) as Muslim, 40 (9.5%) adhered to traditional beliefs, and 18 (4.3%) selected other religions. Concerning living arrangements, 245 (58.1%) lived with their parents or guardians, 163 (38.6%) stayed in the school boarding house, while 14 (3.3%) reported living elsewhere.

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

VARIABLE	MEASURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Age	12–14 years	74	17.6%
	15–17 years	120	28.4%
	18 years or older	228	54.0%
Gender	Male	187	44.3%
	Female	235	55.7%
Grade	Form 1	107	25.4%
	Form 2	148	35.1%
	Form 3	167	39.5%
Religion	Christianity	293	69.4%
	Islam	71	16.8%
	Traditional beliefs	40	9.5%
	Other	18	4.3%
Living arrangement	With parents/guardians	245	58.1%
	In the school boarding house	163	38.6%
	Other	14	3.3%
Total		**422**	**100**

Source: Field Work (2025)

4.1.2 Prevalence of Aphrodisiac Use

Table 4.2 indicates the prevalence of aphrodisiac use among the 422 respondents. A majority of the respondents, 241 (57.1%), reported feeling good after using aphrodisiacs, 114 (27.0%) said they felt bad, while 67 (15.9%) reported other feelings. Regarding the frequency of use, 83 (19.7%) used aphrodisiacs daily, 101 (23.9%) weekly, 139 (32.9%) monthly, and 99 (23.4%) rarely. The age of first use revealed that 57 (13.5%) of the respondents used aphrodisiacs below 15 years of age, 185 (43.9%) first used them between the ages of 15 and 17 years, and 180 (42.6%) began using them at 18 years or older. In terms of the type of aphrodisiac, 185 (43.9%) used herbal products, 97 (23%) used over-the-counter pills, and 140 (33.2%) used other types. For sourcing aphrodisiacs, 129 (30.6%) obtained them from pharmacies, 167 (39.6%) from herbal shops, and 126 (29.9%) from friends or peers. After using aphrodisiacs, 187 (44.3%) experienced positive effects, 108 (25.6%) negative effects, and 127 (30.1%) noticed no significant effects. The overall prevalence of aphrodisiac use among the 422 respondents is 100%, as the data in Table 4.2 is derived entirely from individuals who had reported using aphrodisiacs. This indicates that all the respondents in the sample had experience with aphrodisiac use, making the prevalence universal within the study population.

Table 4.2: Prevalence of Aphrodisiac Use among Respondents

VARIABLE	MEASURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Feelings after use	Good	241	57.1%
	Bad	114	27.0%
	Other	67	15.9%
Frequency of use	Daily	83	19.7%
	Weekly	101	23.9%
	Monthly	139	32.9%
	Rarely	99	23.4%
Age of first use	Below 15 years	57	13.5%
	15–17 years	185	43.9%
	18 years or older	180	42.6%
Type of aphrodisiac	Herbal products	185	43.9%
	Over-the-counter pills	97	23.0%
	Other	140	33.2%
Source of aphrodisiac	Pharmacy	129	30.6%
	Herbal shops	167	39.6%
	From friends or peers	126	29.9%
Effects after use	Positive	187	44.3%
	Negative	108	25.6%
	No noticeable effects	127	30.1%
Overall Prevalence		**422**	**100%**
Total		**422**	**100**

Source: Field Work (2025)

4.1.3 Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use

Table 4.3 outlines the socio-cultural factors influencing aphrodisiac use among the 422 respondents. Cultural promotion of aphrodisiac use was reported by 212 (50.2%) of the respondents, while 210 (49.8%) stated it was not promoted. Regarding encouragement by friends, 168 (39.8%) were encouraged to use aphrodisiacs by friends, whereas 254 (60.2%) were not. Encouragement from family was reported by 111 (26.3%) of the respondents, while 311 (73.7%) were not encouraged by family. In terms of societal pressures, 210 (49.8%) felt pressure from societal expectations to use aphrodisiacs, while 212 (50.2%) did not. Advertisement of aphrodisiacs in the respondents' area was noted by 186 (44.1%), while 236 (55.9%) said there were no such advertisements. Pressure to conform was experienced by 183 (43.3%), while 239 (56.7%) did not feel such pressure. Regarding religious or cultural discouragement, 107 (25.4%) reported discouragement, while 315 (74.6%) did not experience it.

Table 4.3: Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use among Respondents

VARIABLE	MEASURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Cultural promotion of use	Yes	212	50.2%
	No	210	49.8%
Encouraged by friends	Yes	168	39.8%
	No	254	60.2%
Encouraged by family	Yes	111	26.3%
	No	311	73.7%
Pressure from societal expectations	Yes	210	49.8%
	No	212	50.2%
Advertisement in area	Yes	186	44.1%

	No	236	55.9%
Pressure to conform	Yes	183	43.3%
	No	239	56.7%
Religious or cultural discouragement	Yes	107	25.4%
	No	315	74.6%
Total		**422**	**100**

Source: Field Work (2025)

4.1.4 Individual Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use

Table 4.4 presents individual factors influencing aphrodisiac use among the 422 respondents. For confidence boosts in relationships, 132 (31.3%) reported that aphrodisiac use helped them feel more confident, while 290 (68.7%) did not feel any such boost. Only 89 (21.1%), used aphrodisiacs to deal with stress, while majority 333 (78.9%) did not. Regarding academic or physical performance, 107 (25.4%) believed aphrodisiacs improved their performance, while 315 (74.6%) disagreed. Awareness of health risks associated with aphrodisiac use was reported by 164 (38.9%), while 258 (61.1%) were unaware of the risks. Half of the respondents, 211 (50%), held that social acceptance influenced their use of aphrodisiacs, while the other half, 211 (50%), did not. Similarly, 211 (50%) felt pressured to fit in with friends, and 211 (50%) did not. For personal benefits, 216 (51.2%) said they felt personal benefits from using aphrodisiacs, while 206 (48.8%) did not. Regarding stopping use if health effects were noticed, 234 (55.5%) said they would stop, while 188 (44.5%) would not. Finally, for personal motivation, 151 (35.8%) used aphrodisiacs to feel more confident, 75 (17.8%) to explore the effects, 161 (38.1%) due to peer expectations, and 35 (8.3%) for other reasons.

Table 4.4: Individual Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use Among Respondents

VARIABLE	MEASURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Confidence boost in relationships	Yes	132	31.3%
	No	290	68.7%
Used to deal with stress	Yes	89	21.1%
	No	333	78.9%
Improved academic/physical performance	Yes	107	25.4%
	No	315	74.6%
Awareness of health risks	Yes	164	38.9%
	No	258	61.1%
Social acceptance	Yes	211	50.0%
	No	211	50.0%
Pressure to fit in with friends	Yes	211	50.0%
	No	211	50.0%
Personal benefits felt	Yes	216	51.2%
	No	206	48.8%
Stop using if health effects found	Yes	234	55.5%
	No	188	44.5%
Personal motivation for use	To feel more confident	151	35.8%
	To explore its effects	75	17.8%
	Peer expectations	161	38.1%
	Other	35	8.3%

Total		**422**	**100**

Source: Field Work (2025)

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Prevalence of Aphrodisiac Use

The present study revealed a strikingly high prevalence of aphrodisiac use among respondents, with all 422 participants (100%) reporting prior use. This figure far exceeds the prevalence rates reported in existing literature from similar adolescent and youth populations across different countries. For instance, Johnson et al. (2022) found an 18% prevalence rate among students in the United States, while Ochieng et al. (2021) in Kenya reported a 23% usage rate. Similarly, Okoro et al. (2023) in Nigeria reported 28%, Kamara et al. (2022) in Sierra Leone found 21%, and Namara et al. (2021) in Uganda recorded 22%. The studies in Zimbabwe, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and several regions of Ghana such as Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, and Cape Coast all reported prevalence rates ranging from 18% to 30%, none approaching the universal usage reported in this study.

The unusually high rate of aphrodisiac use in the current study suggests a unique context or demographic characteristic of the sampled population that predisposes them to such behavior. It could also indicate a cultural normalization of aphrodisiac use in the study area, possibly driven by peer pressure, social expectations of masculinity, or easy access to these substances. This finding diverges significantly from the broader trend observed in other regional studies, where the use of aphrodisiacs was notable but still limited to a minority of the student population.

A deeper look into the types and sources of aphrodisiacs used further reinforces some agreements with the literature. In the current study, herbal aphrodisiacs were the most common type used, reported by 43.9% of respondents. This finding aligns with most previous studies, such as those by Ochieng et al. (2021), Okoro et al. (2023), Kamara et al. (2022), and Mensah et al. (2023), all of which identified herbal remedies as the predominant form of aphrodisiac consumed among

adolescents. Herbal products were widely reported due to their perceived safety, affordability, and cultural acceptance. Additionally, energy drinks and over-the-counter pills were also frequently mentioned in other studies, mirroring the 23% of respondents in the current study who used over-the-counter pills and the 33.2% who used other types, likely inclusive of energy drinks and traditional concoctions.

The sources of aphrodisiacs in the present study also share similarities with findings from earlier literature. A significant proportion of respondents obtained aphrodisiacs from herbal shops (39.6%), pharmacies (30.6%), and peers (29.9%). Comparable patterns were noted by Johnson et al. (2022) in the U.S., who attributed the popularity of energy drinks and herbal supplements to their easy availability, and by Kone et al. (2021) in Côte d'Ivoire, who emphasized peer influence and cultural access through traditional markets.

Concerning the frequency and age of initiation of aphrodisiac use, the current study again diverges notably from previous research. In this study, 19.7% of respondents reported daily use, and 23.9% used aphrodisiacs weekly. These rates are substantially higher than those reported in Nigeria (Okoro et al., 2023), where only 10% used them weekly, and in Togo (Afolabi et al., 2020), where just 10% reported weekly usage. The age of first use was also revealing, with 13.5% starting below age 15, 43.9% between 15 and 17 years, and 42.6% at 18 years or older. This relatively early initiation mirrors findings in Kenya (Ochieng et al., 2021) and Liberia (Doe et al., 2020), where adolescence was a critical period for first-time use, influenced by curiosity, peer dynamics, and social messaging around sexual performance.

The current study also gathered data on the psychological and physiological responses to aphrodisiac use. Most respondents (57.1%) reported feeling good after use, 27% felt bad, and 15.9% had other experiences. These subjective responses were consistent with the patterns reported in qualitative components of studies in Sierra Leone (Kamara et al., 2022) and Nigeria (Okoro et al., 2023), where students described both perceived benefits and adverse effects

following usage. Additionally, 44.3% of respondents in this study experienced positive effects, 25.6% negative effects, and 30.1% no significant effects. This mixed feedback suggests that while some users continue due to perceived enhancements, others may face side effects but still persist in usage, potentially due to dependence or social influence.

A notable gender-based trend across the literature was also examined in light of the current study, although gender-disaggregated data was not presented in the study findings. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that in all referenced studies—whether in Ghana, Liberia, or the U.S.—male students consistently reported higher usage rates compared to females. This pattern is attributed to gender norms, with masculinity often associated with sexual prowess, prompting adolescent males to seek performance-enhancing substances. Given the universal usage rate in the present study, it would be critical in further analysis to explore whether this gendered pattern persisted or if the trend has shifted within the specific population studied

4.2.2 Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac

This study investigated the socio-cultural factors influencing aphrodisiac use among 422 respondents and compared the findings with existing literature. The data revealed a nuanced interplay between cultural, familial, societal, and religious influences, which either promoted or discouraged aphrodisiac use.

Half of the respondents (50.2%) reported that the use of aphrodisiacs was culturally promoted within their communities, while the other half (49.8%) disagreed. This relatively even split indicates a transitional socio-cultural landscape, where traditional beliefs coexist with evolving norms. This finding stands in contrast with literature from other regions such as Nigeria and Kenya, where cultural promotion was notably higher. For example, Adeyemi et al. (2021) reported that 72% of students in Lagos attributed aphrodisiac use to cultural beliefs, particularly rites of passage into adulthood. Similarly, in Mombasa, Kenya, Kinyua et al. (2023) found that 68% of

students used aphrodisiacs during cultural ceremonies, suggesting a stronger cultural endorsement in those regions compared to the present study.

Peer influence was another factor explored. Approximately 39.8% of the respondents indicated that they were encouraged to use aphrodisiacs by friends, while 60.2% were not. This finding reflects a moderate level of peer pressure, though it is lower than that reported in international studies. For instance, Smith et al. (2023) in New York City found that 58% of students were influenced by peer recommendations. Similarly, in Tokyo, Tanaka et al. (2022) reported that 35% of participants were encouraged through conversations with close friends. In West Africa, peer influence appeared more pronounced. Amoah et al. (2023) observed that 50% of students in Kumasi, Ghana, cited peer pressure as a major influence, which suggests that while peer dynamics are a global factor, their intensity varies regionally.

Family influence emerged as a relatively weak factor in the current study, with only 26.3% of respondents reporting encouragement from family members. This finding diverges sharply from results in several African studies. In Nigeria, for example, Adeyemi et al. (2021) noted that 60% of respondents were introduced to aphrodisiacs by elders. In Ghana, Owusu et al. (2022) found that 62% of students learned about aphrodisiacs from mothers and other relatives, while Osei et al. (2024) reported that 65% highlighted family elders as primary influencers. This discrepancy may suggest a declining role of familial transmission in the study population or a shift toward more individualistic decision-making among the youth.

Societal pressures were also assessed, with 49.8% of participants acknowledging such influences, and 50.2% denying any societal pressure to use aphrodisiacs. This finding again shows a balanced viewpoint within the study population, possibly indicating a society in flux—where traditional societal expectations are being questioned or resisted. However, this result differs from findings in Kenya and Nigeria. Wanjiru et al. (2020) reported that 75% of participants in Kenya viewed aphrodisiac use as a societal expectation, especially for women. Similarly, Suleiman et al. (2022)

in Kano, Nigeria, found that 65% of students believed their communities endorsed aphrodisiac use as a marker of maturity.

Regarding media and advertisement influence, 44.1% of respondents reported the presence of aphrodisiac advertisements in their area, while 55.9% stated otherwise. This suggests a moderate presence of aphrodisiac marketing, though its reach may be limited in some regions. In contrast, media influence was stronger in studies from New York and Tokyo. Smith et al. (2023) found that 30% of participants acknowledged the impact of social media, while Tanaka et al. (2022) noted that 45% of students were influenced by advertisements and peer discussions. Pressure to conform was experienced by 43.3% of respondents, while 56.7% did not feel such pressure. This aligns with the general finding of divided opinions among participants regarding societal and peer pressures. Compared to global studies, this pressure seems less intense. In the United Kingdom, Hassan et al. (2021) found that 70% of male students associated aphrodisiac use with masculinity and community expectations, and 40% were influenced by community rituals celebrating physical prowess.

Finally, religious and cultural discouragement was reported by only 25.4% of respondents, indicating that religious and cultural institutions are not actively dissuading aphrodisiac use for the majority. This contrasts with findings from the UK, where 35% of students from conservative religious backgrounds viewed aphrodisiac use as tied to ideals of purity and vitality (Hassan et al., 2021). The relatively low rate of discouragement in the present study may suggest a permissive or indifferent stance from religious and cultural gatekeepers, potentially facilitating aphrodisiac use among youths.

4.2.3 Individual Factors Influencing Aphrodisiac Use

The findings from the present study reveal several individual-level psychological and social factors that influence aphrodisiac use among respondents. These include the desire for increased

confidence in relationships, coping with stress, enhancement of academic or physical performance, social acceptance, personal benefits, peer pressure, and the influence of personal motivation. A notable proportion of respondents acknowledged using aphrodisiacs to gain confidence, while others were driven by peer influence or the perceived benefits such as enhanced personal well-being or social belonging. Interestingly, awareness of the associated health risks did not significantly deter use for a substantial number of respondents, and only a slight majority indicated they would stop using aphrodisiacs if adverse health effects were noticed.

When these findings are compared with existing literature, both consistencies and divergences are evident. In the United States, the study by Smith, Johnson, and Brown (2023) indicated that stress, particularly related to body image and academic pressure, was a significant motivator for aphrodisiac use among students. The present study similarly found that some individuals used aphrodisiacs to manage stress, although this reason was less commonly reported. Peer influence, however, was a predominant theme in both studies, aligning with the assertion by Smith et al. that peer dynamics strongly shape such behaviours among adolescents.

The findings from Spain by Lopez and Garcia (2021) support the role of personal insecurities and self-esteem issues in influencing aphrodisiac use. In the present study, many respondents cited the desire for increased confidence and personal benefits as reasons for use, mirroring the psychological underpinnings discussed in the Spanish study. Furthermore, curiosity and social acceptance as motivations in the Spanish context correspond with the present study's findings on peer-related and motivational drivers.

In the United Kingdom, Wright, Walker, and White (2022) highlighted that societal pressures and perceived inadequacies in social or sexual life were pivotal in encouraging aphrodisiac use. These pressures were especially pronounced among female students. The present study echoes this, particularly where respondents expressed the need to conform to social expectations or reported pressure from peers as a major factor. Although the current study did not disaggregate data by

gender, the presence of social conformity motives is consistent.

The California-based study by Carter, Kim, and Gray (2021) underscored peer pressure and anxiety about sexual performance as leading factors. This is consistent with the present findings, which showed that many respondents were influenced by their social circles, with peer expectations serving as a central motivator. Additionally, the link between aphrodisiac use and the desire to improve one's self-image or social desirability was also present in both contexts.

Across various African contexts, peer pressure and societal norms emerge as dominant psychological determinants. The Kenyan study by Mwangi and Otieno (2022) found a strong correlation between peer encouragement and aphrodisiac use, which is closely aligned with the current findings where peer influence and social acceptance were significant. Similarly, in Nigeria, Eze and Adebayo (2020) reported that media portrayals and self-esteem issues played key roles. Although the present study did not explicitly measure media influence, the emphasis on confidence and attractiveness suggests a parallel influence of societal ideals and perceived sexual norms.

In Uganda, Nabuuma and Kato (2021) noted that stress from social and family expectations contributed significantly to aphrodisiac use, alongside peer influence. These findings align with the current study, which revealed stress management and peer dynamics as relevant factors. Likewise, South African findings by Maluleke and Ndlovu (2022) emphasized social pressures, body image concerns, and anxiety about sexual performance as major motivations. These concerns were mirrored in the present study's identification of personal benefits and psychological motives like the desire for increased confidence and improved self-worth.

Within Ghana, the studies conducted across Kumasi, Accra, Takoradi, and Tema consistently reinforce the relevance of peer pressure, body image concerns, and the pursuit of social acceptance in driving aphrodisiac use. The findings by Amoah and Boateng (2023), and Asante and Owusu (2022), for instance, highlight the prominence of peer influence and body image insecurities,

which directly correspond to the present study's observations. The studies in Takoradi and Tema also highlighted similar motivations, such as stress related to sexual performance and social desirability, further validating the current findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the key findings of the study, draws conclusions based on those findings, and offers actionable recommendations to address the issues identified. The research aimed to explore the prevalence and determinants of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in Ghana. The study examined socio-demographic factors, patterns of aphrodisiac use, socio-cultural and individual influences, and awareness of health risks.

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 Research objective

The main objective of this study is to examine the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

5.1.2 Target population

The target population for this study comprised all students enrolled at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University during the academic year. This included both male and female students.

5.1.3 Sample technique

The study employed a simple random sampling technique.

5.1.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was carried out over a four-week period to ensure a comprehensive coverage of the target population. Trained research assistants were engaged to administer the questionnaires and ensuring ethical standards were maintained throughout the process.

5.1.5 Data Analysis Technique

The study was analysed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, was use to summarise demographic data the prevalence and use of aphrodisiacal. Inferential statistics byvaried and multivaried was done to determine the influencing factors of aphrodisiacs use.

5.1.6 Key findings

The findings from this study reveal important insights into the use of aphrodisiacs among the adolescent respondents. In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, the majority of respondents 228 (54.0%) were 18 years or older, with Form 3 students representing the highest proportion by grade level. Most participants identified as Christians 293 (69.4%) and were more likely to live with their parents or guardians.

Regarding the prevalence of aphrodisiac use, all respondents reported prior use, with the most common feeling after use being positive. Monthly use emerged as the most frequent pattern, while daily use was the least common. The highest proportion of respondents 185 (43.9%) began using aphrodisiacs between the ages of 15 and 17 years, with herbal products being the most used type, and over-the-counter pills being the least used. Herbal shops were the most common source of

aphrodisiacs, while pharmacies were the least. Positive effects after use were most frequently reported, with negative effects being the least observed.

Socio-culturally, cultural promotion and societal pressure appeared to be evenly split, while family encouragement was the least reported influence. Advertisement presence was less commonly noted, and most respondents did not report religious or cultural discouragement.

On an individual level, the most commonly cited motivation was personal benefit, with dealing with stress being the least common reason for use. While many respondents were unaware of health risks, a substantial number 234 (55.5%) indicated they would stop using aphrodisiacs if adverse health effects occurred. Peer expectations were a dominant motivation among personal reasons, whereas exploring the effects was the least mentioned

5.1.7 Study Limitation

This study, while offering valuable insights into the prevalence and influencing factors of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University, also had limitations. The absence of qualitative methods such as interviews limited the depth of understanding regarding personal motivations and contextual influences behind aphrodisiac use. Finally, the study focused primarily on socio-cultural and individual psychological factors, omitting other potentially relevant factors such as economic status and institutional influences that could also affect aphrodisiac use.

5.2 Conclusion

The study found an exceptionally high prevalence (100%) of aphrodisiac use among students at Agric Nzema Senior High School and Christian Service University, which is significantly higher than rates reported in other countries and regions. Key influencing factors included peer pressure, cultural acceptance, perceived personal benefits, and accessibility of aphrodisiacs (particularly

herbal types).Socio-cultural influences such as cultural promotion, societal pressure, and peer encouragement played a substantial role, although family influence was less significant compared to findings in other studies. Individual motivations included a desire for confidence, performance enhancement, and social acceptance, while awareness of health risks was relatively low.The study concludes that the normalization of aphrodisiac use among the youth in this context is driven by a combination of social, psychological, and environmental factors, and calls for intervention through education, regulation, and counseling to mitigate potential health risks and dependence.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings from this study;

5.3.1 Educational Institutions

- Schools should implement educational programs that focus on the dangers of aphrodisiac use and provide alternative strategies for addressing stress, relationship issues, and self-esteem.
- Teachers and counselors must receive training to identify early signs of aphrodisiac use and provide appropriate support.
- Schools should establish clear policies on substance use and ensure a safe environment where students can discuss health-related concerns confidentially.

5.3.2. Parents and Guardians

- Parents must engage in open and honest discussions with their children about the risks of aphrodisiac use and the importance of making informed health decisions.
- Guardians should monitor their children’s behavior and intervene when necessary to address any signs of aphrodisiac use.

- Families must foster a supportive environment where adolescents feel comfortable seeking help or guidance on difficult topics like aphrodisiac use.

5.3.3. Healthcare Providers

- Healthcare providers must routinely screen adolescents for aphrodisiac use during consultations and offer education on the associated health risks.
- Medical professionals should be trained to counsel patients on safer alternatives to aphrodisiac use, especially for adolescents seeking stress relief or confidence boosts.
- Providers should collaborate with schools and community organizations to host workshops or awareness campaigns about the risks of aphrodisiacs.

5.3.4. Community Leaders and Religious Institutions

- Religious leaders should openly address aphrodisiac use within their congregations and educate the community on the potential harms, aligning messages with cultural and religious values.
- Community leaders must work alongside schools, healthcare providers, and local authorities to create public awareness campaigns that discourage aphrodisiac use.
- Religious and cultural institutions should offer counseling and support for adolescents who may be facing societal pressure or peer influence related to aphrodisiac use.

5.3.5. Media

- The media must partner with health professionals to provide evidence-based content to debunk myths and misinformation about aphrodisiacs use

- The media should run nationwide awareness campaigns through TV, radio, newspapers, and social media to educate the public about the health risks and side effects of aphrodisiac use.
- Media outlets should produce and broadcast educational shows, documentaries, or mini-series to explore the causes and consequences of aphrodisiac use.

5.3.6 Government and Policy Makers

- Policy makers must consider regulating the sale and distribution of aphrodisiacs, especially those sold in informal markets, to limit their accessibility to adolescents.
- The government should fund and launch public health campaigns aimed at educating young people about the dangers of aphrodisiac use and promoting healthier lifestyle choices.
- Policies should prioritize the development of support systems for adolescents, including access to mental health services and programs addressing substance use prevention.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Consent Form and Instructions for Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in a research study conducted by students from Christian Service University, Department of Nursing And Midwifery. This study aims to assess the '***PREVALENCE AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF APHRODISIAC USED AMONG STUDENTS AT AGRIC NZEMA SHS AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY IN THE ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA'.***

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and will be used solely for research purposes. Completing the questionnaire should take approximately 30 minutes.

Consent:

Before you begin the questionnaire, please indicate your consent to participate by checking the box below.

[ ] I have read and understood the purpose of this study, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

Thank you for your valuable contribution to this important study.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON: ***PREVALENCE AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF APHRODISIAC USED AMONG STUDENTS AT AGRIC NZEMA SHS AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY IN THE ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA***

Instructions for Answering the Questionnaire:

• Please read each question carefully and answer honestly to the best of your ability.

• For each question, select the option that best represents your answer by marking the corresponding box provided next to the option.

• If you do not understand any part of the questionnaire, feel free to ask for clarification from the research team.

• Answer all questions; if a question does not apply to you, please indicate as such where possible.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

a) 12–14 years ☐

b) 15–17 years ☐

c) 18 years or older ☐

2. What is your gender?

a) Male ☐

b) Female ☐

3. What grade are you currently in?

a) Form 1 ☐

b) Form 2 ☐

c) Form 3 ☐

4. What is your religion?

a) Christianity ☐

b) Islam ☐

c) Traditional beliefs ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

5. Where do you live while attending school?

a) With parents/guardians ☐

b) In the school boarding house ☐

c) Other: _____ ☐

6. Which of the following can help enhance sexual desire? (Select all that apply)

a) Medications or drugs ☐

b) Certain foods or drinks ☐

c) Herbs or natural supplements ☐

d) Scents or fragrances ☐

e) Water (e.g., hydration) ☐

f) Physical exercise ☐

g) Other: _____ ☐

7. Substances like those listed in question 6 that stimulate sexual desire, arousal, or pleasure are called aphrodisiacs. Do you believe this is true?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

8. If yes, how did you first learn about aphrodisiacs?

a) Friends ☐

b) Family ☐

c) Media (TV, social media, etc.) ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

SECTION B: PREVALENCE OF APHRODISIAC USE

9. How did you feel after using aphrodisiac?

a) Good ☐

b) Bad ☐

c) Other: _____ ☐

10. How often do you use aphrodisiacs?

a) Daily ☐

b) Weekly ☐

c) Monthly ☐

d) Rarely ☐

11. At what age did you first try an aphrodisiac?

a) Below 15 years ☐

b) 15–17 years ☐

c) 18 years or older ☐

12. What type of aphrodisiac have you used?

a) Herbal products ☐

b) Over-the-counter pills ☐

c) Other: _____ ☐

13. Where do you typically get aphrodisiacs?

a) From a pharmacy ☐

b) Herbal shops ☐

c) From friends or peers ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

14. Have you experienced any effects from using aphrodisiacs?

a) Yes, positive ☐

b) Yes, negative ☐

c) No noticeable effects ☐

15. Do you feel aphrodisiacs are commonly used by other students?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

16. What do you think motivates people to use aphrodisiacs?

a) Peer influence ☐

b) Perceived benefits ☐

c) Curiosity ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

17. Would you recommend aphrodisiacs to others?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

SECTION C: SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

18. Do cultural practices in your community promote aphrodisiac use?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

19. Have any of your friends encouraged you to use aphrodisiacs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

20. Have family members ever recommended aphrodisiac use to you?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

21. Do you think societal expectations push young people to use aphrodisiacs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

22. Are aphrodisiacs heavily advertised in your area?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

23. If yes, where have you seen such advertisements?

a) TV/Radio ☐

b) Social media ☐

c) Billboards/posters ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

24. Do you feel pressure to conform to peer behavior when it comes to using aphrodisiacs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

25. Are there religious or cultural teachings that discourage aphrodisiac use?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

26. Do you believe societal perceptions influence how aphrodisiacs are used among students?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

SECTION D: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

27. Do you think using aphrodisiacs boosts confidence in relationships?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

28. Have you ever used an aphrodisiac to deal with personal stress or anxiety?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

29. Do you believe using aphrodisiacs improves academic or physical performance?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

30. Are you aware of the potential health risks of aphrodisiac use?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

31. Do you think using aphrodisiacs makes you more socially accepted among peers?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

32. Have you ever felt pressured to use aphrodisiacs to fit in with friends?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

33. Do you personally feel any benefits from using aphrodisiacs?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

34. Would you stop using aphrodisiacs if you learned they have long-term health effects?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

35. What personal reasons, if any, motivate your use of aphrodisiacs?

a) To feel more confident ☐

b) To explore its effects ☐

c) To meet societal or peer expectations ☐

d) Other: _____ ☐

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey! Your responses are greatly appreciated.