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An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Token Resistance to Sex amongst Nigerian Undergraduates

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Abstract

It is apparent that existing social conventions unofficially mandates women to refuse sexual advances even when there may be the intention to engage. The adherence to this social script is what is referred to as token resistance or scripted refusal. Some studies have explored the subject of token resistance from a number of perspectives that attempt to identify the underlying reasons why women engaging in token resistance. However, there is very little research on this subject from the Nigerian perspective. This study sought to explore token resistance further in order to understand the cultural cogency or peculiarity of the concept in the Nigerian context. This is because based on available literature, the conceptualization of token resistance may be different. With the use of purposive sampling technique, four sexually active women and undergraduates, volunteered to participate in the study. They were interviewed to understand their unique experiences and perception about token resistance using the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) It was discovered that factors like personal pride, self-control, emotional security of relationship and the gratification of increased attention were responsible for women's rejection of sexual advances even when there was the intention to do so. The study also got a better understanding of how women culturally represent this concept in Nigeria. We highlight limitations of the study and suggest areas for further study research.

Keywords

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Nigeria, scripted refusal, sexual advances, token resistance

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An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Token Resistance to Sex amongst Nigerian Undergraduates

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It is apparent that existing social conventions unofficially mandates women to refuse sexual advances even when there may be the intention to engage. The adherence to this social script is what is referred to as token resistance or scripted refusal. Some studies have explored the subject of token resistance from a number of perspectives that attempt to identify the underlying reasons why women engaging in token resistance. However, there is very little research on this subject from the Nigerian perspective. This this study sought to explore token resistance further in order to understand the cultural cogency or peculiarity of the concept in the Nigerian context. This is because based on available literature, the conceptualization of token resistance may be different. With the use of purposive sampling technique, four sexually active women and undergraduates, volunteered to participate in the study. They were interviewed to understand their unique experiences and perception about token resistance using the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) It was discovered that factors like personal pride, self-control, emotional security of relationship and the gratification of increased attention were responsible for women's rejection of sexual advances even when there was the intention to do so. The study also got a better understanding of how women culturally represent this concept in Nigeria. We highlight limitations of the study and suggest areas for further study research.

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Introduction

A cursory look at sexual behaviors in existing social structures in the Nigerian society reveals the adherence to normative or traditional perspectives of sexuality. These are the roles and standards in which sexual behaviors in social settings or society are judged and measured (Canan, Jozkowski, & Crowford, 2016; Walker, 1997). Although the acceptance of these standards is not necessarily enforced, considerable pressure form society and the fears of being rejected constrain most people to comply even when inclined to act otherwise (Deaux & Major, 1987).

This is the premise within which the concept of token resistance was shaped (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). The study of token resistance was pre-empted by the need to explore the traditional sexual script which dictates that women should not directly declare their interest in engaging in sexual activity even if they want to and that men should constantly persist in their public declaration of sexual interest from women (Baumeister & Leary, 1995;

Burkett & Hamilton, 2012). In other words, the concept of token resistance simply means refusal of sexual activity or offers while intending to engage in that activity (Walker, 1997). Therefore, understanding the psychological underpinnings for such a “refusal” when it may not necessarily be a “refusal” within the Nigerian context is the focus of current research.

As a conservative African society, Nigeria’s approach towards sexuality is woven around rigid religious and traditional norms. This has made most ethnic communities less receptive to progressive ideologies of sexual freedom and fluidity. Of significance, is the patriarchal family structures and adoption of authoritarian parenting styles that constantly reinforce the rigidity of its moral landscape (Ayansiji, 2010). Nigeria is also a nation with one of the highest religious orientation in the world, with the northern part predominately Muslim and the southern, Christianity (Nakpodia, Shrivs, & Sorour, 2018). This scenario further asphyxiates the acceptance of liberal perspectives with regards to sexuality and often deems any overt expression as immoral (Onyemelukwe & Achor, 2013). It is on this foundation that Nigerian sexual scripts are constructed and enforced thereby making it a distinctive setting for this research. These scripts are highly selective, intensively punitive and morally restrictive, thus making sexual expression more subtle and covert. Based on pedestrian experience, lady may not readily concede that she craves sexual intimacy, and this is not just because it makes her sound promiscuous but also because such expression as viewed as morally objectionable in the Nigerian context. Therefore, dynamic interaction between religious, traditional and ethic standards of morality makes people more prone to display token resistance to sex in Nigeria.

On a broader context, the rise of the #Metoo movement around the world consolidates the need to engage in studies of this nature within the academia. The #Metoo is targeted at ensuring that women who are victims of sexual violence and abuse, are given a secure platform to speak out (Bhattacharyya, 2016b). Its success so far has been inspiring, specifically to women who aim to protect bodily autonomy and sexual freedom (Bronstein, 2005; Bhattacharyya, 2014). Although there are precursors to the existence of sexual or social scripts, the #Metoo movement places sexual consent above anything else as this serves as a deterrent to potential sexual abuse (Bhattacharyya, 2016a).

At this point, it is imperative to note that Token Resistance to Sex is a concept specifically restricted to those who have genuine intentions to engage in sexual activity (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998), but decide not to express them, due to the influence of dynamic cultural factors. This aspect of culture is explored in this study. To be explicit, the instrumental purpose of this study is to answer two fundamental questions; 1. At what point does a lady say no, when intending to say yes, when a sexual advance is made towards them? 2. What factors are qualitatively responsible for that response? On a broader note, this research, seeks to contribute to this invaluable global conversation by ensuring that genuine sensual intentions of women are recognized and the comprehension of their responses in sexually vulnerable settings are understood. In other words, is the Nigerian woman any different from women in Western world in the way they react to sexual advances? This is essential the import of this paper.

At the inception of the use of the concept, Muehlenhard and McCoy (1991)’s article argued for the use of the term “scripted refusal” instead of “token resistance.” The article suggested that the use of the word “token” could be interpreted as manipulative and conventionally unscrupulous. They also suggested that the word “resistance” sounded like a defensive physical refusal to engage in sexual activity despite secretly intending to do so (Muehlenhard & MacNaughton, 1988). Thus, the use of the term “scripted refusal” sounded more fitting as it represented a verbal refusal to deviate from the traditional sexual scripts. However, Muehlenhard (2011)’s use of token resistance as the appropriate term to describe the phenomenon has been more widely used in related studies than the term scripted refusal. Despite this evolution in the etymology of the concept, researchers have continued to explore

this concept (e.g., see, Canan, Jozkowski, & Crawford, 2016; Shafer, Ortiz, Thompson, & Huemmer, 2018). The current study will most preferably use the term token resistance.

Psychological Basis of Study

In this study, we sought to expand literature by exploring the cogency and cultural perspectives within which token resistance occurs. It further seeks to identify the psychological underpinnings of token resistance within the context that values may differ from country to country or culture to culture. This involved the in-depth inquiry into the cognitive and emotional states of people who engage in token resistance to sex.

In addition, we also sought to explore the basis of the level of compliance to existing sexual or social scripts that have already established ways in which women or men may act in social settings. Therefore, understanding the circumstances within which token resistance is more or less likely to occur was a key part of the study because it delved deeply into the meaning making processes of the females who are the main participants in the study of this phenomenon (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). Apart from that we sought to understand how other intrinsic factors like personality, motivation, moral convictions, and values play out in token resistance to sex and how these factors could interact to understand responses to sexual advances (Rutherford, 2011).

Review of Literature

Sexual miscommunication could be explained as the inability to convey clear information about intentions as regards sexual activity. Token resistance to sex is therefore can be seen as an aspect of sexual misinformation that emerged as a result of existing serotypes in the media and literature that women constantly resist sexual advances while secretly craving it (Koukounas & Letch, 2001)

The study by Muehlenhard and Hollabaugh (1988) aimed at establishing empirical evidence for the acceptance or rejection of these stereotypes. They did this by asking women if they have openly rejected offers for sexual activity while secretly intending to engage in it. Their study revealed that over 39% of these women confirmed that they engaged in token resistance to sex. When asked the rationale for their resistance, the women asserted that they acted in that way a few times because they felt it was the ideal way to act in social settings. The study clearly identified three reasons why women engaged in token resistance. The first is for “Practical Reasons”, where women literally fear to appear promiscuous in society or to their male counterpart. The study further examined deeper into the protection of public image and perceptions which have been largely shaped by sexual scripts. The second reason identified was “Inhibition –Related Reasons,” in which moral and religious values pay a pivotal role in increasing the level of resistance even with strong intention to engage in sexual activity. Successful resistance leads to a sense of fulfilment that values have been upheld despite the challenging test of sexual intention. The final reason identified is the “Manipulative Reasons,” where ladies resist so has to feel in control and as to get whatever they want from the men demanding for sexual activity.

Further study was done by Muehlenhard and McCoy (1991), revealed that 37% of the women interviewed regularly engage in token resistance. This is as a result of existing sexual beliefs, attitude and stereotypes that exist in society. The study compared women who have engaged in token resistance (saying no when intending to say yes) with those who did not. The comparative analysis showed that the token resistance category were more likely to have sexual attitudes that paint romantic or sexual relationship as confrontational and combative. It further added that men should have to pay a hard price to get sexual satisfaction from women (Locke

& Mahalik, 2005). It is a belief that women have the ultimate supremacy when it comes to sexual activity and they must exercise it optimally through token resistance in order to get the recognition they deserve (Muehlenhard & McCoy, 1991).

Shotland and Hunter (1995) identified some novel areas as regards token resistance to sex in what they called the memory consolidation hypothesis. The women they interviewed revealed that most times they do not necessarily consent to having sex in token resistance situation. Some of them may actually have intentions not to engage in sexual activity, which is in congruence to rejection of sexual advances, but during the course of the sexual request, some of them may be persuaded to or may change their mind without actually admitting to it. Some of the women also revealed that their reason for resistance is due to the negative feelings that may emerge when they engage in sexual activity or when they appear too easy to get (Muehlenhard & McCoy, 1991).

Studies have also shown that women are most times under pressure to admit their affirmative intentions toward sexual activities even if they do not want to (DeLamater & Mac-Corquodale, 1979). On the flipside, the awareness of sexual double standards automatically places women and men to accept them even if critical self-appraisal may show a different intention. For example, the belief that, good women don't say just yes and real men don't just say no (Muehlenhard, 1988). Women do start the process of sex, though oftentimes indirectly (Perper & Weiss, 1987). It may make the women's' real intentions doubtful and act in ways that conform to these standards. In these situations, token resistance is reported to have a higher frequency and thus may push men to continue to persist even if they have been turned down repeatedly. With this background in mind, it is plausible to expect that token resistance may occur more with ladies who believe and conform to the traditional sexual scripts. However, very little studies have attempted look at this concept inductively to the best of our knowledge, especially within the Nigerian context. The current study therefore aims to explore how token resistance plays out distinctly in the Nigerian context and from the perspectives of our participants.

Role of the Researchers

The researchers in this study work in an academic community where discussions about the subject matter of this research often came-up in routine conversations. We then felt that as researchers, we should consider exploring the topic further in a systematic study. We reasoned that our roles as researchers in this study would be that of a neutral witness and empathic listeners of the process of gathering data. This required a highly detached yet extensively analytical approach to what the participants were saying. The rationale for that scenario was the extremely sensitive and personal nature of the data collected. In other words, participants were required to share unique experiences of their personal lives which is typically private. The moral landscape of Nigeria, as explained earlier in the introduction is punitive and restrictive to sexual expression. Therefore, we employed empathic listening as a tool to making the participants feel safe to say whatever they express about token resistance to sexual advances. This approach sought to help build the rapport with participants and to constantly enable them to feel understood. The researchers also played an important role in the optimal management of the interview process, to ensure that responses addressed the specific issues of interest and time used with acuity. In our own understanding, we reasoned that the most appropriate tool for data analysis, which is the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, would help in the inductive identification of specific themes and the emergent evolution of the data we gather from the participants.

Method

Research Settings

The research was conducted at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. It is a setting known for academic and social activities. Situated, in Lagos, Nigeria, the university is clearly at the centre of commensal activities and is one of the country most prestigious. Although, Lagos is vastly populated by the Yoruba ethnic group of Nigeria, it is one of the most diverse states in the country and it also attracts a lot of both local and international tourists. This is what makes the University of Lagos, one which is rich in cultural and ideological diversity. Furthermore, the campus encourages free speech and open discussion irrespective of your ideological leanings, making it the best possible location to carry out this study.

Research Design

For the purpose of improving the depth of the study, qualitative research methodology was used as the method of enquiry, this involved gathering non-numerical and detailed information through in-depth interviews. The inductive approach used in this methodology creates opportunities for constructive and reasoned interpretation of the perspectives of participants in the study. Its bottom-up approach lends precedence to observation before the development of theoretical principles or models to explain phenomena (Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000). Thus, it offers opportunities for the emergence of novel themes and ideas that can be used to explain phenomenon in distinct ways. It is also relatively biographical and implies that participants undergoing the interview are helped to identify the chain of thought that leads to the expression of their ideology, experiences and indeed perceptions. The research design therefore requires a fluid and flexible, atmosphere for participants to fully express themselves (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Rationale for the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

What makes IPA highly suitable for the study is the detailed and sensitive way interviews are analysed. IPA is a result of the evolution of the philosophical school called phenomenology where investigations are made based on the varieties and uniqueness of conscious experience even without concerns about if the experience is undoubtedly real. Thus, IPA falls under the philosophical constructivist ontology which emphasizes that humans consciously construct the phenomena that exist in their environment (Smith & Osborn, 2003). The epistemologies that are interpretative in nature gives opportunities for “inter-subjectivity”. This is the process where the researcher and participants play active roles in identifying and interpreting the meaning making process of the participants’ ideas or narratives of lived experiences (Smith, 2004). This double hermeneutic process improves the rigor of the exploration and helps to give greater, yet more concrete meaning to the experiences of the participant (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

On this backdrop, interpretative phenomenological analysis works in three distinct phases. The first involves an initial noting of themes where the participants revelations are crystalized into a few words that convey the central narrative of these revelations. The process continues throughout the entire interview transcript which in turn leads to the next stage.

The next stage involves the clustering and tracking the unique themes which emerged from the first stage. This involves identifying the object responsible for the theme formation and transformation of these themes to psychological constructs or variables that are in

congruence with it. This process is done for every single participant through the identification of relevant perceptual and experiential claims of each participant.

The final stage involves the final cluster of themes where the superordinate and subthemes are identified (see appendix). The number of participants contributing to each sub-theme is identified and this is used to make logical conclusions (Smith & Osborn, 2003). All these three stages were applied in this study.

Sampling Technique and Participants

Participants in study were selected using a purposeful sampling strategy. This sampling technique involved the use of participants that have unique and homogenous characteristics for the study. In this study, we searched out for volunteers who were between their late adolescence and early adulthood (Ages 18-25). The criteria for selecting the participants were sexual activity and relatively high social exposure by our definition. It also involved the selection of participants who had a more liberal and less conservative view of sexual intercourse or sexual activity in its entirety. Four female participants who volunteered and met the participation requirements were selected and engaged for extensive interviews for the purpose of the study. According to Smith and Orsborn (2003) sample size is such a study is not much of concern but what is important here is the “thickness and richness” of the data. The participants in this study were undergraduates of the University of Lagos, Nigeria.

The Interview Process

The interview took place in a favourable environmental condition where participants were made to sign an informed consent form which was a contract to conceal their identity and assure them of confidentiality consistent with requirements of the American Psychological Association (APA). The questions asked in the interview were semi-structured questions that examined their perception of sex, attitude towards existing traditional sexual scripts, token resistance experience and how they felt during and after such experiences. Depending on the dynamic of response, participants were guided and directed around the scope of the research.

The interviews lasted a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 25 minutes, each interview was recorded with an electronic recorder which was used to develop the initial transcript used for the study. The transcription of the interview was done verbatim as every word and emotion expressed by the participants was recoded. The standards for the transcriptions were done based on the standards set by Smith, Jarman, and Osborn (1999). Analysis was done on the interview using the standard guidelines for IPA as already stated.

However, for the purpose of clarity, it is imperative to reiterate once more that the process of doing the analysis followed an iterative and inductive cycle (Smith & Osborn, 2003). The first stage involved reading and re-reading through the entire transcript until we got to a point where we had a comprehensive understanding of what was in the transcript which led to the identification of themes in the first case. This largely consisted of our “stream of consciousness” in terms of the initial ideas, comments or words noted on the left-hand side of the margin of the original transcript.

In the second stage of the analysis, the words or comments earlier noted on the left margin of the transcript were transformed into emergent theme titles and then listed them on the right-hand margin of the transcript. We ensured that the concise words or phrases captured the essential qualities of what was in the transcript.

Subsequently, in the third stage, we linked the emergent theme titles to the transcript so as to explore the connection between them and indeed themes that were no convergent. The clustering of these themes was checked against the transcript to ensure that they were

reasonable reflections of the interviews conducted. At this juncture, the direct quotes were connected with each theme so that the original meaning of the theme was not lost in the process of interpretation.

In the fourth stage, we compared the emergent themes to understand the commonalities or contradictions with each other. These sub-ordinate themes were then formulated into super-ordinate theme. We then created a table of overall themes as indicated in the appendix. The entire process involved going back and forth till we reached a point of data saturation.

Analysis of Findings

Contrary to the standards which inherently exist in social scripts, the study revealed novel results as to the underlying reasons for token resistance. The importance of this study is highlighted significantly by the profound amount of distinct themes that emerged in the study showing the uniqueness in the meaning making processes of the participants interviewed.

One major theme is one in which attention seeking was a key reason for token resistance to sex. It was conceded that due to the fact that men were highly predisposed to obeying traditional sexual scripts, they are more likely to persist in their demand of it. This persistence makes them vulnerable to the attention seeking tactics of the women who believe that initial refusal will motivate the men to persist in their demand for sex. For example, this was the reaction of participant 1 when asked if she had any experience where she resisted a sexual advance for its sake:

Yes, there was but I said no not because I wanted the person to persist but because I was trying to control myself. (Participant 1)

Apart from the constant seeking of attention from their sexual partners, women who are highly conscious of the scripted belief that they are inclined to play “hard to get,” many of them believe that it would be really personally gratifying and it would boost their personal pride if they do not conform. Thus, even if they intend to engage in sexual intercourse, they resist these advances because they feel that it would boost their personal pride or social image. For example, Participant 4 was asked why women say no when they don’t really mean to say to say and this was what she had to say:

...You are saying no because you don’t want him to think I gave in to easy or I don’t want him to think I do it in any place. (Participant 4)

Therefore, those who use personal pride a yardstick for refusal possess self-control and may be more inclined toward attaining a sense of emotional security before giving in. A clearer understanding was explored when participants resisted sexual advances because they felt the man was a potential mate and thus engaging in sexual activities may ruin the chances of consolidating prospective emotional relationship with him. This implies that, women who find a man desirable for a serious relationship like marriage or dating are more likely to resist than when they perceive the person as just a fling. Participant 2 and 4 had this to say about that:

...that no I said was not because I was not in the mood. I was in the mood, but I want to start something real and I don’t want it to be based on we had sex, so I want it to be real like let’s just have a real thing... (Participant 2)

The real thing here suggests a more stable relationship that could lead to marriage. Similarly, Participant 4 had this to say:

...when there is emotional attachment, you care about what the other person thinks about you. When it is just sex, I don't care as long as we are doing it and we both enjoy it... (Participant 4)

Furthermore, the response of Participant 2 is a reflection of the fact that sex is viewed as initial deterrent to the establishment of romantic relationship, but more to that it is also viewed as necessary in every relationship. In such instances, they still felt horrible at the fact that they are depriving the person they are attracted to of sexual activity and who they also intend to engage with by way of marriage. This mental conflict between their need to establish a strong romantic relationship and their strong desire to engage in sexual activity ultimately makes them revolt with themselves in some instances. This is clearly captured when participant 2 and 3 said the following:

It was horrible. It takes self-control; it is not everybody that can do that. (Participant 2)

I was punishing myself, I won't say it is punishment but that is what people call it. How did what feel? The punishment... (Participant 3)

Extending the narrative of resistance due cravings for increased attention, comes a rather novel angle where resistance is done to vindictively punish their sexual partners for a momentary misunderstanding. Participants conceded that whenever there exist a conflict between them and their partners or when they are unhappy with him about something, they are very inclined to resist sexual advances from their partners even when they intend to.

...there are sometimes he wants it and I don't want it oh. If we are fighting or he doesn't give me what I want, may be material things and am like, he didn't give me so why will I give him... (Participant 2)

I remembered a time I was arguing about something..... He now said ok, let's go and have sex am like no! I don't want to. Not like I didn't want to but I was trying to make sure that we don't drift from the point. (Participant 3)

The response from Participant 3 reflects the fact that whenever there are issues which are perceived to really important to her, she would rather not engage in sexual activity so as to convey to her partner the importance of the issues being discussed. Exploring this further, it was observed that sex may deter sexual partners from comprehending the issues in the relationship especially then it is considered pending and urgent.

It is important to note that participants conceded that there is always a mental-physiological conflict between their conscious decisions and physiological cravings for sex. In these kinds of scenarios, resistance to sex became difficult to resist. This was captured in the following text:

I wanted to say no cause there one other person in the room, but I could not because the physiological need was more so.... (Participant 3)

This consolidates the narrative that token resistance requires a lot of self-control especially for ladies who have a personal goal to stay away from sex. Some of these “celibacy goals” may be as a result of the need for participants to attain mental clarity of relationship goals or due to personal moral or intrinsic values.

...In some cases, I felt bad cause I feel have fallen short of standard I made for myself so other cases I felt good other cases I felt indifferent... (Participant 3)

Furthermore, when personal values influence token resistance, it is due to the fear that agreeing to engage in sexual activity may greatly affect personal pride and self-worth. Therefore, successful resistance is perceived by the ladies as a personal victory which is reinforced by stronger belief in themselves as a social actor. This is captured in the following example by participant 1.

I did not do anything with this person not because I did not want to but because I was able to control myself... (Participant 1)

Environmental and proximal conditions within which sexual advances are made also helps in explaining how strong token resistance will be. Therefore, when a lady perceives that the condition within which sexual activity is demanded isn't comfortable for her, she is likely to resist even if she has the intent. A second layer of analysis is when it is perceived that this sexual advance reflects a pace in the friendship she cannot reasonably handle, she is very likely to resist.

...I felt like it was not appropriate or the conditions weren't right and I actually wanted to, in fact, she no slipped out while I was still considering it... (Participant 4)

Thus, even if she experiences internal discomfort for rejecting sexual advances even when there was the intention to do, she is likely to deal with this by some sort of rationalization. This implies that she begins to believe that it is for a good reason and probably the best possible foundation within which a successful relationship can be built upon, as seen in participant 4.

...I didn't beat myself up too much about it because I felt oh well, it all for the best any way... (Participant 4)

...Sometimes, we enjoy the fact that we say know, we like the feeling of let him wait a little (laughs) then later you give in... (Participant 2)

Despite the ease of sexual activity within relationships, it was revealed that token resistance may occur as a result of the need to reduce sexual intensity. This is in congruence with the response of Participant 2, where she states that she engages in token resistance because she doesn't want a relationship built on sex. Furthermore, Participant 4 suggested that she engages in token resistance when she perceives that sexual intensity is too high in the relationship.

...it seems like the relationship itself was being centred on sex. There were times when we will spend the weekend together and we literarily don't know what to say to each other. So, we pick up our phone and we are on the net, you know that we are having sex... (Participant 4)

Token resistance is also affected by how assertive the lady is and how well she is able to articulate her intention. When approached for sex in socially active settings, some find it difficult to say no due to the fear of social rejection or early childhood experiences. Those who have developed strong convictions may be stronger at resisting even despite the apparent consequences.

...I get scared because I would if I say no, I would be harmed. So, I wouldn't be able to say anything and in those three occasions, I was saved by somebody who would call me... (Participant 4)

Despite the high compliance to sexual or social scripts, token resistance is affected by several other underlying factors as revealed by the participants of the study. This reinforces the significance and categorical imperatives of individual differences and the need for contemporary research to explore them in detail.

Discussion

The main purpose of this research was to explore participants' perspective of token resistance in the Nigerian context. The themes that emerged from the study were reflective of dynamic nature of psychological processes existing within women and their sexuality (Walker, 1997). It challenges the traditional sexual scripts by establishing relatively novel and underlying reasons why women engage in token resistance to sex. It identifies key issues like personal pride, social perception, appropriate environmental condition and pace of emotional relationships as inherent reasons why women may say no to sexual advances when intending to say yes. It also identifies internal conflicts between choices and physiological cravings and fear. It also makes the person involved more aware of their emotions and the need to build relationships with less sexual activity. Furthermore, the desire to be in control and cravings for attention or affection are some of the underlying essential causes for token resistance.

In addition to the three reasons highlighted by Muehlenhard and Hollabaugh (1988) and also the memory consolidation hypothesis by Shotland and Hunter (1995), this study establishes new perspectives which are related to engaging in token resistance to strengthened romantic relationships. It also supports the notion that most women believe that token resistance is proactively necessary to sustain the spark and excitement in a relationship. They believe that total compliance to sexual request is detrimental to the focus on other relatively important issues in their emotional relationships. This study also adds that women who set goals to maintain sexual purity may see yielding to sexual advances as a hurtful outcome which can render them emotionally unstable. Finally, result from the interviews supports the fact that some participants view the existence of traditional sexual scrips as essential control mechanisms for improved social perception.

It is therefore recommended that further research should focus on the context or environment within which token resistance is likely to occur. That was explored in this study but not exhaustively. Further studies could consider asking participants "hypothetical questions" as to how they will likely act if advances were made in a different circumstance. Furthermore, a key social actor in token resistance to sex which wasn't extensively analysed in the study was the male counterparts who demand for sex. Future research should delve into exploring their perception about sexual double standards and identifying their mental state when there is a resistance. More, importantly, male counterparts may also have exhibited token resistance to sex. Therefore, this phenomenon need to be explored in future research to help do gender based comparative analysis.

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Appendix

Overall Table of Themes

Superordinate theme:	Participants contributing to this theme.	Subthemes	Participants contributing to this sub-theme.
Perception about self	All participants except 4	Highly irritable	1
		Socially active	1
		Nice crazy person	1
		Mood Swings	1, 2
		phlegmatic sanguine	3
		studies environment	3
		Perception of Sex	All participants
Neutral Perception	1		
Easy to get	2		
Emotional attachment absent in recent sex	2		
Sex is overrated-perceived as big	3		
Sex is underrated-perceived without respect			
Sex should be solemn	3		
Having a bucket list	3		
For social excitement	3		
Should be attracted to sexual partners	3		
Reproductive process	4		
Brings about shame in some culture	4		
Liberal towards sex	4		
Experience of Sexual Advances	All participants	Mistaken for a prostitute	1
Insightful about male sexual advancement for sex		1	
Indirect physical sexual advances		1	
Felt uncomfortable		1	
Irritating when no in mood		2	
Initially masturbation at 17		3	
Painful experience		3	
Was impressed with direct about demand for sex		4	

Token Resistance	All participants	Advances came during modelling career	4
		Rejected advances consistent with intention	1
		Couldn't trust anyone	1
		Emotional attachment present	1
		Conceded out of pity	1
		Felt regrets after concession	1
		Guilty feelings	1
		Avoids token resistance scenarios	1
		Personal pride most important	1
		Persistence from guy	2
		Didn't want a relationship built on sex	2, 4
		"Didn't want to be a side chick	2
		Some guys are skilful at persisting	2
		Token resistance to avoid drift from the point	3
Wanted to prove a point	3		
Feelings towards resistance	All participants	Felt it was inappropriate	4
		Felt proud	1
		Gratification for self-control	1
		Initially felt down	1
		Token resistance increases personal pride	1
		Felt horrible	2
		Difficult	2
		Felt like she was punishing herself	3
		Felt bad due to persistence	3
		Felt he perceived her as loose	3
		Felt disappointed	3
Rationale for Resistance	All participants	Felt awkward	4
		Wasn't comfortable	4
		Emotionally attached	1
		Full knowledge of relationship definition	1
		Personal pride	1
Personal gratification	1		

		Sense of responsibility for choices	1
		Increased attention	2
		To have fun	2
		To get attention	2
		To delay gratification	2
		Resistance because of lack of bodily response	3
		Didn't want to be remembered for sex	4
		Sex was pushing out important things	4
General Perception of Sexual Scripts	All participants except 3	Girls should avoid conceding due to pity	1
		Girls should avoid conceding due to pity	1
		Girls should avoid conceding due to pity	1
		Guys must learn to play the game	2
		Guys must persist	2
		Girls out rightly follow sexual script	4
		Some girls are very clear on intentions	4

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