

## ABSTRACT

Eating the forbidden fruit: The relationship between Social bonding, Religiosity and Sexual behaviour among divorced persons in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Trinidad

David Balfour

Limited studies have been conducted on the sexual behaviour of persons within a religious setting. This study examines the relationship between social bonding, religiosity, and sexual behaviour among divorced persons in the Seventh day Adventist (SDA) church in Trinidad. Sexual behaviour was defined as sexual intercourse, and specified as vaginal or oral sexual intercourse. A sample of (n=555) persons was randomly selected using a multistage stratified random sampling from multiple congregations throughout Trinidad. Sixty-five persons were divorced at the time of the study. The data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire. Forty-five percent of the divorced respondents engaged in sexual behaviour over the last five years. The study found that the main independent variables, social bonding, and religiosity significantly explained 13.5 % of the variance in the sexual behaviour of divorced persons. Religious leaders who desire to reduce sexual behaviour, (eating the forbidden fruit) among divorced parishioners need to encourage activities that promote social bonding. Future research may consider an examination of the procedures used by religious individuals to reconcile any disconnect between their sexual behaviour and religious belief systems.

Keywords: David Balfour; social bonding; religiosity; sexual behaviour; Seventh Day Adventist; Trinidad.