

**KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE TEACHING OF SEX
EDUCATION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN EGOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO STATE**

BY

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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certified that OSARETINOMWAN IMUDIASE FRANCIS with the matriculation number EDU1904627 of the Department of Health Safety and Environmental Education carried out this work in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science degree (BSc. Ed) in Health Education.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my mother, Mrs. Okunyimwen Florence Airemwen a lover of EDUCATION.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

- Background of Study
- Statement of the Study
- Research Questions
- Purpose of the Study
- Significance of the Study
- Scope/Delimitation of the Study

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- Concept of Sexuality Education
- Origin of Sexuality Education
- Theoretical Perspective of Sexuality Education
- Attitudes of Parents, Teachers, Religion and Students towards Sexuality Education
- Barriers of Sexuality Education among Students
- Summary of the Review of Literature

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

- Design of the study
- Population of the study

- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of Instrument
- Reliability of Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

- Research Question One
- Research Question Two
- Research Question Three
- Research Question four
- Discussion of Findings

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- Summary
- Conclusion
- Recommendation
- REFERENCES
- APPENDIX

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Sex education is described as education about human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, emotional relations, reproductive rights and responsibilities, abstinence, contraception, family planning, body image, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, values, decision making, communication, dating, relationships, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how to avoid them, and birth control methods.

Foucault (1986) asserts that, individualistic attitude is characterised by the absolute value attributed to individual's singularity and by the degree of independence conceded to him vis-à-vis the group and institution he is answerable to; that is, the way a person behaves will depend largely on what he values, the amount of freedom he is allowed and what the society expects of him.

Over the years, ancient theories and ideologies about sexuality, circled around the power of dreams, the individual as a sexual being

and the power of self-cultivation. However this concept has undergone many changes over the years with the emergence of sexuality revolution which has immensely affected the sexual orientations, sexual relations, the formation of family and reproduction.

Ikpe (2004) postulated that “Sexuality defines the very essence of one’s humanity including one’s self-image, being male or female, physical looks and reproductive capacity; that is sexuality is a natural part of life. It is about the way we are made, how we feel about ourselves, what roles we play in the society and how we procreate”.

This study intends to familiarize secondary school students in Nigeria with factual and accurate sexual information about the dimensions of sexual knowledge that will enable them clarify their personal values, improve their sexual knowledge and sexual decision making, and promote their knowledge about how all these interacts with socio-cultural and religious factors to affect personal well-being.

Statement of the Problems

The youth between the ages of 10-24 makes up 36.7 per cent of the Nigeria population and have been found extremely susceptible to antisocial behaviours such as violent crimes, unprotected sexual activities, and drug abuse among many other vices.

The Nigeria Association for the promotion of Adolescent Health and Development (NAPAHD) has raised concerns that a hospital based researched has shown that 80 per cent patients with abortion complications are adolescents. This was based on the fact that over 16 per cent of teenage females and 8.3 per cent of boys both at age 15 reported first sexual intercourse. This adolescent health challenges has been ascribed to their great lack of the information and knowledge about the implications of their population behaviour on their sexual health and the general welfare of the nation.

Culture as a way of life determines, to a large extent, human behaviour. It is patterned, learned, shared and adaptive and is transmittable from one generation to the other (Basso, 1997). Culture has a way of influencing every thing we do. It can be perpetuated and has the potential to overpower intervention programmes and educational innovations.

Religious and spiritual beliefs influence feelings about morality, sexual behaviour, pre-marital sexual behaviour, adultery, divorce, contraception, abortion and masturbation (Greenberg et al 2000). Sexuality education can be seen as yet another religion which is not necessarily different from what already obtains.

The interrelationship of biological, psychological and socio-cultural dimensions determines the total personality of an individual. Therefore, the introduction and institutionalization of sexuality education became one of the immediate efforts made to address these problems and create awareness about these sexuality based problems.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What are the knowledge and attitudes of parents towards sexuality education in Egor Local Government Area?
2. What are the knowledge and attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education in Egor Local Government Area?
3. What are the knowledge and attitudes of students towards learning sexuality education in Egor Local Government Area?
4. Do religious beliefs affect the attitudes of parents, teachers and students towards sexuality education in Egor Local Government Area?

Purpose of Study

This study will elucidate the origin of sexuality education, how it has evolved in Nigeria and how well it is fairing among children in Egor Local government Area of Edo State, Nigeria.

Significant of the Study

The challenges of sexuality education will be discussed by examining the relationship between sexuality, society and culture, ethics, communication, socio-economic status, information, gender and the media.

Scope/Delimitation of the Study

This study seems to examine the knowledge and attitudes of teaching sex education in secondary school. This study is delimited to students in in Egor Local government Area of Edo State, Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature will be reviwed under the following sub-heads

- Concept of Sexuality Education
- Origin of Sexuality Education
- Theoretical Perspective of Sexuality Education
- Attitudes of Parents, Teachers, Religion and Students towards Sexuality Education
- Barriers of Sexuality Education among Students
- Summary of the Review of Literature

Concept of Sexuality Education

There are various school of thoughts that has emerged about sexuality education. Sexuality Education is the planned process of education that fosters the acquisition of factual information, the information of positives attitudes, beliefs and values as well as the development of skills to cope with the biological, psychological and social-cultural, spiritual aspect of human sexuality (AHI,2003). This means learning about the anatomy, physiology and bio-chemistry of the sexual response system which discovers the identity, orientations, thoughts and feelings as influenced by values, beliefs, ethics and moral dismay. It is the interactive relationship of these dimensions that describes an individual's total sexuality (SIECUS, 1995).

Sexuality education educates us that, religious principles, beliefs, rules and regulations and ethical considerations influence our everyday

interactions just as our culture, role models in our families and our friends influence us as well. Sexuality education is simply the art of learning how to correspond to a certain art of living by being able to reason, examine and monitor oneself in clearly defined terms.

Origin of Sexuality Education

Sexuality education came into existence at various times in different countries of the world. The sexual revolution of the 1800s contributed greatly to the debate of sexual pleasure as an ethical substance which continued to be governed by relations of force, struggle and establishment of dominion. During that period, women demanded to know more about their sexuality. They questioned and protested against rules and regulations prohibiting the use of contraceptives and the spread of information about them. Males and females began to question the concept of virginity and male dominance during the first six to seven decades of that century. Bruess and Greenberg (1994) revealed that, between 35 and 45 per cent of females and 55-65 per cent of males engaged in sexual relationships before marriage at that time.

Intense advocacy of sexuality education changed the way people think about sexuality, hence sexuality education was introduced in Swedish schools by early 1900s. Women education led to the increase

in their workforce and they became a significant part of the society. This made them demand for equality in all spheres of human endeavour. These “new” women, according to Murstein (1974), wanted freedom similar to that of the men. The rise in the status of women in America during that period also enhanced discussions on sexuality issues.

In Nigeria, sexuality education was taught in the traditional way like the coming-of-age ceremonies where the youth were educated about manhood and womanhood. Various methods like contraceptives which included virginity, herbs, breastfeeding, the ring, and abstinence were explored; most of which were strictly meant for the married and kept as a secret. Sexually transmitted diseases was also of great concern because the contraction of them was a big shame and stigma. The socialization process of the child remained strictly the only way of acquainting the child with issues like family relationships and public manners with very little room for self-expression. People started to question the moral view points about virginity and abstinence and wondered about the credibility of rigid moral standards and myths that surrounded sexual issues as school education expanded.

Rapid urbanization encouraged rapid improvement in communication, transportation which had tremendous effect on

sexuality issues in Nigeria. Telephones and letters helped to promote interpersonal relationships. The print media enhanced and popularised the notion of flirting, dating and other of sexual behaviours. Intimate relationships from social activities such as dancing, singing and local drama sketches were developed. In spite of these changes, information on sexuality were still kept in the dark, not openly discussed, and was perceived as dirty or evil particularly by religious leaders who often viewed morality as being determined by a higher order from above (Adepoju, 2005).

The carnal knowledge about early childhood sexuality was kept intact until recently when it came to light that early childhood experiences are related to sexuality. Today, conservative morality about sexuality is beginning to diminish with people gradually coming to terms with the fact that sexual knowledge can serve as a great weapon against ignorance.

Evolution of Sexuality Education in Nigeria

Population education was the an efforts to introduce sexuality issues in the Nigerian educational system and was done through the introduction and institutionalisation of which was considered as a potential way of tackling the problem of rapid population growth and

its consequences for socio-economic development in the country. There was need to inform young people about the causes and consequences of uncontrolled rapid population growth which has become paramount. The National Population Policy of 1988 which was recently revised and officially launched in February 2005 was put in place with emphasis on population education as a potential vehicle to translate the population policy into action.

Health and educational professionals in Nigeria are of the opinion that the health of the adolescents is at risk. These burgeoning adolescent groups who constitute more than 12 per cent of the population of Nigeria are expected to rise sharply over the years. They are exposed to unplanned sex, unwanted sex, unsafe abortion, sexual coercion, sexual violence, sexually transmitted infections and even HIV because they are uninformed or poorly informed, about the consequences of their reproductive behaviour and health risks especially for under-age sexual practices and other anti-social practices. The federal government, donor agencies and non-governmental agencies have put forward initiatives to address population problems and issues over the years. The Federal Ministry of Education and the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) have been involved in curriculum and instructional package development

and teacher training for school-based population and family-life programmes.

Drawing from practical experiences, the Directors of National Education Programmes in African countries drew up general principles upon which African population and family-life education programmes was based, as follows: the contribution which population education can bring to the socio- economic development of the community and the nation, the importance of both individual decision-making on population matters, and the role of the family in collective decision making, the importance of understanding the social and cultural context in which population education contents are to be integrated, the fact that low rates of school enrolment and high rates of drop-outs should lead to greater recognition of out-of-school programmes and the need to sensitise the decision-makers in Africa on their countries' population situation and problems (UNESCO, 1985).

Udo and Viederman (1979) argued that the definition of population education should include components such as: Population education as a part of a total social learning process which can assist learners to better regulate their lives and their environment, population education, being a problem-centred process, could enable learners to define their own and their communities' population-related

problems, population education is concerned uniquely with the population interactions and inter-relationships between the individual and the communities in which he\she lives and population education is oriented towards the improvement of the quality of life of both individuals and the society, both now and in the future.

Given these principles, a general definition of population education was formulated as an educational programme designed to create awareness and understanding of population issues directly related to social, economic and cultural development of the individual, the family and the nation; to enable informed decision-making on population matters in order to contribute more effectively towards the amelioration of socio-economic and cultural welfare of the individual, the family and the nation (UNESCO, 1985).

The evolution of sexuality education and its introduction in Nigerian schools came about when it became apparent that there was, as there is, an urgent need to address adolescents' reproductive health, reproductive rights and sexuality issues. The need to prepare the adolescents for their adulthood roles that conform to contemporary life styles has become paramount and success was seen to depend greatly on basic education and information on health care and positive relationships provided the adolescents. In tune with Karolina

Widerstorm, such education could empower young women to have a greater control over their sexuality and reproduction to the benefit of social and economic aspects of their lives. It also has the potential to respond to overall life situation of the adolescents, address their holistic well-being and help them achieve their full potential.

The success of the efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria lies in strong political support and the continued strong commitment, team work and skillfulness of prevention teams of donor agencies, NGOS and projects such as The Vision Project and the African Regional Sexuality Resource Centre housed under the Action Health Incorporated in Nigeria.

In recent times, the Action Health Incorporated (AHI) has been in the frontline of NGOs complementing government's efforts in raising awareness about adolescent health issues and setting a new direction for adolescent sexuality education in Nigeria by building on lessons from the past success and constraints, and appreciating the present potentials of sexuality education in strengthening national development efforts for a brighter future. AHI has viewed sexuality education as an educational process which provides for an articulated and practical study of the various dimensions of human sexuality with the aim of developing in the individual a more rational attitude and

responsible behaviour towards improving the quality of life of the individual now and in the future. To borrow the words of International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) it is, “an education process designed to assist young people in their physical, social, emotional and moral development as they prepare for adulthood, marriage, parenthood and ageing, as well as their social relationship in the socio-cultural context of family and society” (IPPF, 1987)

A cursory review of these principles and definitions demonstrates in clear terms the relationship between Population Education and Sexuality Education. Although the objectives of the two concepts are basically to create awareness and promote understanding of population issues directly related to social, economic and cultural development, sexuality education seeks further to promote proper development of personality through the acquisition of factual knowledge.

The rationale for sexuality education includes; Taking responsibility for sexual health, Building new morality and removing falsity among people, preparing adolescents for adulthood roles, Helping adolescents to achieve their full potentials, providing sexual knowledge that can serve as weapon against ignorance.

Theoretical Perspective of Sexuality Education

Traditionally, sexuality education drew its content from social demography, human ecology, family life and sex education. Details of these contents and the areas of emphasis varied between, and sometimes within, countries in response to the particular requirements of individual cultures and population situations. In most cases, sexuality concepts were basically meant to prevent early pregnancy and disease.

At the beginning, there were difficulties in determining the content of sexuality education, the way it could be adopted and how it could be taught. Selection and presentation of contents relating to sexual behaviour posed great problems. Although sex education is generally considered as important, a number of its content areas were highly controversial and turbulent whenever they were associated with cultural and religious issues.

In order to apply the most useful concept of sex education to sexuality education, some countries embraced the participatory approach, others chose rote methods whereby learners were expected to memorise the facts in the hope that it would in some ways lead to behaviour change. Conscious efforts were made to exclude sexual/sensual matters hence the concept of sexuality was used as a broad knowledge base to provide contents for sexuality education.

Issues such as homosexuality, contraception and abortion were potentially inflammatory and were kept away.

The practical experience countries have had in introducing sexuality education is leading to a new way of perceiving sexual contents and their appropriateness, just as the upsurge of adolescents' health problems in Nigeria has led to a new way of perceiving adolescents' reproductive health information in the country.

Given the interactive nature of the subject of sexuality, its content ranges from; Human growth and development, relationships, life skills, sexual attitude and behaviour, sexual health, Society and culture.

Each of these content areas has its various sub-divisions. It is worthwhile to note that, although other intervention programmes such as population education, environmental education, and family life education share some important contents (as in sex education), sexuality education is a different field. Its conceptualization corresponds to sexuality issues and problems and it is meant to contribute to their solution. Therefore, the contents of sexuality education respond to the specific sexuality needs that emerge from population issues such as the adolescent sexual health problems and problems of acculturation that are plaguing Nigeria today. Sexuality

education in Nigeria is a huge task, though it has many prospect, it also faces many challenges.

Attitudes of Parents, Teachers, Religion and Students towards Sexuality Education/Barriers of Sexuality Education among Students

Sexuality education like other intervention programmes in Nigeria has suffered many setbacks. Its challenges are found in the various attitudes of parents, teachers, religion and students towards impacting the knowledge of sexuality education. These attitudes may also be a barrier and hindrance to students as highlighted below;

Society, Culture and Sexuality

Interactively, complex sets of biological, psychological and socio-cultural issues influence the human sexuality. The way we feel about our worth, the way we think and our body image play important roles in our sexuality (Ikpe, 2004). Most of the time, we judge our looks and behaviour with what our culture dictates. For example, the idea of what is attractive with respect to height, weight, hairstyle and skin tone are all socio- cultural ideas.

Society and culture go hand in hand. Society can simply be defined as a group of people living in an area, regenerating its members through reproduction and sharing the same culture as in knowledge,

habits, belief, art, morals, law and custom. Both society and culture are dynamic and prone to change. The goal and significance of what is and could become of the population (i.e. people) in the future occupy a very vital place in the philosophy and the history of traditional African societies (Nigeria in particular), hence, great emphasis is placed on the importance of life, the eternity of the human being and the immortality of the community. These are constantly preached and reinforced through family formations, kinship systems and initiation ceremonies.

The perpetuation of each family, clan or line of descendants or community is of major concern, hence all political, economic, cultural, spiritual and ideological efforts are geared towards this end. Given this scenario, it can be deduced that sexuality is one of the major concerns of traditional societies and that the ideology on which traditional sexual education was based was biological which perfectly corresponded with the then prevailing socio-economic conditions.

The idea of social constructionism, from which sexual identities and experiences are acquired, is influenced and modified by the ever changing social environment (Tiefer, 1995). That is, society and culture control both the biological and psychological components of sexuality in the sense that people acquire and assemble meanings, skills and values from other persons around them (Foucault, 1986). Indications of

how to think, talk, act or comport ourselves begin during the early period of socialising among family members and progress through the circle and network of friends and schools. In this way, cultural and social issues consistently affect our thoughts and actions.

Sexuality education debunks ideologies and social constructs that regard certain words as dirty and wrong, that certain parts of the body are unmentionable and that sometimes we should hide our feelings and other myths and taboos that influence the human sexuality negatively. In Nigeria cultural heterogeneity, multiculturalism, ethics, social status and other traditions perpetuate rules and norms that affect the perceptions of parents, teachers and others and therefore serve as catalysts against the successful implementation of sexuality education in the country.

Religion and Sexuality

It has often been said that, behaviour comes out of belief systems hence many people have equated sexuality education with some form of religion or gospel that has emanated as a response to adolescent's sexual health problems.

Religion plays an important role in individual's sexuality as its principles, regulations and practices affect our everyday interactions. Wilson and Filsgen (1986) emphasised that religious beliefs influence

sexual attitudes and behaviour. Greenberg, Bruess and Haffner (2000) opined that religious and spiritual beliefs influence feelings about morality, sexual behaviour, premarital sexual behaviour, adultery, divorce, contraception and abortion.

Some of the positive impact of religion on sexuality have been said to include assertiveness, postponement of age of first sexual experience, diminished pre- and post-marital sexual permissiveness, responsible relationships in marriage and parenthood. Indeed, according to Laumann (1994), conservative or traditional beliefs exert strong impact on sexual experience for as Fazl (1993) noted, “Islam endorses any form of beneficial knowledge which must be acquired by every Muslim male or female and also recognises the dynamic of change in human societies as long as human reason is not placed at par or above divine wisdom”. That is, God is the source of all knowledge hence any subject of study must be founded in the parameters set by and through revelation. It is also believed that Christianity is the friend of government because; it is the only religion that changes the heart.

Invariably, religion continues to pose a daunting challenge to the successful implementation of sexuality education in Nigeria. While Christianity is seen as less rigid and highly adaptable to societal change, Islam is very rigid and not receptive to any subject whose content is at

variance with its ideals. The idea of intermingling of people of the opposite sex, half-naked dressing and female assertiveness is seriously frowned at by Islam. Christianity tolerates the idea of protective sex as a measure of avoiding “sinful” abortions, but frowns at masturbation and covetousness.

The Islamic injunction believes that both the Islamic moral philosophy and the social system of Islam have adequately taken care of the sexual problems beyond the conception and scope of sexuality education. It is strongly believed that religious knowledge, be it Islam or Christianity helps children to cultivate religious attitude towards life and orientate them towards self purification, self actualisation and socialisation. Both Christianity and Islam do not see the need for sexuality education in Nigeria.

Socio-economic Status and Sexuality

The problem of low self-esteem and self worthlessness due to poor socio- economic background and lack of sexuality information has been identified by sexuality educators. It is generally believed that, the socio-economic status of individuals greatly influences their sexuality and that, persons of low income status often think and act differently from middle class individuals in matters affecting their sexuality. Low income status people are prone to becoming pregnant and bearing

children at an earlier age. In certain societies, such people showcase high parity and large family size as a means of obtaining high status among their peers (Michael et al, 1994). This status problem that confronts almost 75 per cent of Nigerians who are agrarians needs to be addressed through the acquisition of personal skills in value clarification, self-esteem, goal setting, assertiveness, decision-making etcetera as offered by sexuality education. This will help to control juvenile acts and unprofitable sexual behaviour among the poor and the lowly.

Values have been identified as those things individuals attach much importance to. Such things are very important to us to the extent that we can even place a price on them. Being able to clarify own values vis-à-vis others such as family and friends enables us to understand issues such as virginity, abstinence, responsible parenthood, respect for others, etc. Responsible sexual decision making is a major attribute of value clarification.

Selingo (1997) argued that sexual experience does not necessarily bring wisdom or skill in sexual decision making. Lack of value clarification restricts our understanding of the many social and cultural factors that influence our sexuality, undermines our understanding of our feelings and jeopardises our sexuality.

In view of the prevailing high illiteracy and poverty levels in the country, special non-formal sexuality education programmes have to be designed and implemented for the out-of-school populations, in particular those in rural areas, where the majority of the population live.

Ethics and Sexuality

The ethics of sexuality is about the way we treat ourselves and others in respect to questions such as; Should or should I not drink alcohol or smoke cigarette? Should I be or should I not be a prostitute? Is it right to engage in sexual activity with an underage person or a stranger? Is it right to use position or power to obtain sexual favours?

How we respond to ethical questions about our sexual behaviour differentiates what is wrong from what is right and could depend on our type of personality and how skilled we are in handling our emotions and actions. Ethical decision-making underscores the importance of taking responsibility for one's sexual wellbeing. Our reproductive health, sexually relationships, use of contraceptives, drug abuse, sexual

coercion etcetera are issues that call for appropriate use of ethical decision-making. Teaching the adolescent about how to make ethical decisions concerning their sexuality and sexual behaviour is an important attribute of sexuality education which promotes rational thinking and positive decision-making.

Communication and Sexuality

Communication can simply be defined as an act of transmitting and receiving messages. One of the most important elements for living in a society is communication or language because it provides the society with a means of socialising its members and a mechanism for role-taking and role-playing. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal, and involves a lot of negotiations between the sender and the receiver. Our personality traits can easily be determined, most of the time, through the ways we communicate. The way we talk or walk, our facial expressions and our other body gestures are different ways by which we communicate. That is why it is generally easy to differentiate an extrovert from an introvert (Adepoju, 2005). Our communication style may lead to a sexual or non-sexual relationship.

Effective sexual communication has remained difficult, elusive and almost unattainable in Nigeria. This has remained a great constraint against the effective implementation of sexuality education in Nigeria

because free, open and relaxed communication about sexual topics between adults and the youth (particularly parents and children) have been left to only specific occasions such as traditional initiation ceremonies that alert boys of their coming of age and girls of their readiness for marriage and procreation. Little or no reference is made to reproductive health and/or reproductive rights. Most of the time Nigerian children resort to books, films etc to learn sexual communication only to be criticised by the adult populace; this act of criticism makes the youth feel threatened and sometimes impairs their ability to function normally. Criticism has been known to affect sexuality with regards to sexual functioning and denigration of self esteem. It is therefore imperative that criticism, when given, should be constructive and non-destructive.

For criticism to be effective, the environment, time and attention are pertinent. There is also a need for positive approach, specificity of the situation and awareness of limitations of the person being criticised. On receiving criticism, non-defensive attitude should be adopted with less justification of actions and understanding and appreciation of the criticism.

It is a well known fact that the ability to give and receive criticism is difficult but specific suggestions should lead to actual change. In this

vein, the sexuality education teaches the youths how to open up their relationship to discussion of problems, how to foster a style of communication that will enhance all aspects of their relationship and enable them to discuss freely matters that bother them through free expression of their emotions and behaviour. This is one of the great gains of sexuality education.

Information and Sexual Well-Being

One of the major concerns of sexuality education in Nigeria is the sexual health and well-being of its populace, particularly the youth. Ample research findings have revealed that, sexual activities (especially among teenagers) are on the increase globally. Emergence of new cultures has led to acculturation and a redefinition of 'sex' among the youth (Adepoju, 2001). Sexual matters have become permissive and liberal among members due to exposure to media both foreign and local and the abandonment of important traditional virtues. It is therefore believed that, knowledge that wanton sexual activities with multiple partners can result in unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, HIV/AIDS and even death, can contribute to the practice of safer sexual behaviour among the youth.

In Nigeria, young persons' inability to access sexuality information either through the home or school has contributed immensely to high

prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and other adolescents' sexuality problems. Sexuality education in Nigeria is about providing vital information on reproductive health needs of the adolescent in relation to the inculcation of good practices and reinforcement of values and group norms against unprotected sexual behaviour. Whether this information is accurately provided by the various institutions is another challenge for sexuality education in Nigeria.

Gender and Sexuality

Gender can simply be defined as masculinity or femininity, taking into consideration biological, social and cultural norms. A person's self image as a male or female and the roles the person is attached to can be used as gender identity. It is a common assumption that, society and cultural factors exert more influence on gender identity than to define its roles for males and females and reinforces behaviour through gender roles socialisation. Any deviation from societal expectation of gender roles is labelled inappropriate (Adepoju, 2005). Gender roles differ from society to society and each society has different socialisation process designed for their children.

In most Nigerian cultures, women are expected to be quiet, passive and concerned primarily with home, husband and children, while men are expected to be gruff, strong and unfeeling and

concerned with work and acquiring wealth. This process has been found to have a serious negative effect on sexuality in the sense that qualities, capabilities and interests of individuals are consistently jeopardised.

In most cases, career women who appear to be aggressive in their quest for money are sometimes treated with disdain and disrespect. Social pressure, rigid customary practices and even the law have led to people being boxed-in with limited self-expression, personal growth and development.

The major ways which gender affect sexuality include; Pressure to conform to socialisation leading to anxiety in men and women, Consideration of men as sensitive, gentle and intimate beings is eroded, women are not considered as same sexual beings as men, men and women get locked into specific roles leading to difficulty in division of labour, and conflict in interpersonal relationships, emotional needs and expectations.

Ample research by W.H.O, John Hopkins University Centre for Communication Programmes and other similar organisations have demonstrated that women are more vulnerable biologically, culturally and socio-economically to majority of sexually transmitted infections including HIV. The Nigeria Demographic Health Survey has also

indicated that, an estimated one third of 600,000 women who obtain abortions each year in Nigeria are adolescents. They also reported that, 13% of women and over 27% of men reported exchanging money, gifts, or favours for sex within a fiscal year. These are threats to women's lives and overall national development.

In order to alleviate some of these gender problems, sexuality education arouses the individual's self assertiveness and ability to empathise with others. This social interaction skill enables the individual to express their feelings freely and helps men and women to be directive and sensitive in order to function effectively. For example, women need to make decisions in parenting, in control of their careers and in their sexual behaviour, while men need to accept responsibility for parenting and be happy with being both givers and receivers as well as seeing the sharing of intimacy as a normal process rather than being loss of control over the women. The prevention of sexually transmitted infections and diseases through the inculcation of responsible sexual behaviour especially among the adolescent group in Nigeria is one of the major concerns of sexuality education. As laudable as these intentions are, the problems that confront sexuality education in this situation are threefold; Poverty; the socio-economic status of the adolescent, Society; ideologies and conservatism of parents and other

stakeholders and Implementation; perceptions of teachers, coverage and measurement of learning outcomes.

Media and Sexuality

Ellis (1998) asserts that, “society depends on persuasion”. Children are persuaded daily by parents to accept certain forms of lifestyles; advertisements are created by producers to make people spend money; politicians persuade people to vote for them; while individuals persuade each other to remain in friendship, be it conjugal or platonic.

According to an estimate by the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), more than twenty million people are exposed to their commercials every day. Many writers and speakers discretely or pointedly enter individuals’ lives through radio, magazines, books, brochures and so on, leaving the individual with many choices about what to do, what to buy and who to be.

Most of the time, the media, whether audio, print or visual, has been blamed for affecting the minds of people negatively with very little potential of creating positive change in them. The media poses a great challenge to sexuality education in the sense that it does not necessarily complement the tenets of sexuality education because sexuality messages by the media cannot be devoid of selfish interest and propaganda. Such messages could easily be seen as mere

entertainment thereby restraining the potential to impart accurate information about sexual problems.

Education, Sexual Knowledge and Sexuality

Education as a liberalising influence is also an indicator of sexual behaviour. According to Michael et al (1995) people with at least some school education in general tend to have more sexual partners than those who have not been to school, and this has led to obstruction of success due to unwanted and unexpected pregnancy, and ill prepared parenthood. This happens to be the case even among college students, and has been known to affect status by creating a sense of self-worthlessness and personality conflict among target groups.

Knowledge, it is generally acknowledged, is a great weapon against ignorance. A sound foundation of sexual knowledge helps the individual to dispel sexual myths, superstitions and misinformation that hinder proper understanding or create confusion. Accurate information enables the individual to think critically and make sound decisions and also take responsibility for sexual health (Caron and Bertran, 1988). Knowing and feeling that we are normal persons can go a long way to increase our sense of personal worth and self-esteem.

In recent times, the idea of how to engage in 'safer sex' depends on how much accurate and up-to-date sexual knowledge we have.

Safer sex has been identified to mean achieving satisfaction and personal control through getting more pleasure with less risk hence, the things we need to consider when thinking about 'safer sex' will include: Types of activities that can lead to the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), Whether an individual belongs to a high risk group, What can be done to reduce the risk of transmitting STDs and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and Whether the two people involved share the same opinion concerning STDs, etc.

Access to factual knowledge as offered by sexuality education enhances our understanding of socio-cultural traditions, rules, norms, inventions and systems that govern our personality.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the various techniques and procedures that were adopted to collect and analyze the data for the study. This chapter shall therefore address the following headings;

- Research Design
- Population of the Study

- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrumentation
- Validation of the instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Administration of the Instrument
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The design that was used in this study is the descriptive survey research design. This design was chosen because the study involves collecting data from grouped of people that are representatives of the entire population.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is composed of some senior secondary school students of Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, estimated at about eight hundred and forty (840).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study consisted of 200 senior secondary school students who were selected using systematic sampling techniques. This

was done by serializing their register and picks the 1st and every 15th from the register to yield 25% from the entire population.

Research Instrumentation

The instrument used for the data collection was questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A solicited demographics of the respondents while Section B sought information on the knowledge and attitude towards the teaching of sex education among secondary school students.

Validity of the Study

The instrument was validated by my supervisor and two other lectures in the Department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education. Their critics and corrections were put into the final draft of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instruments was determined through a test-retest 2 weeks later the instruments was re-administered to 20 of the same respondents was determine using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Administration of the Instrument

The instrument was administered by the researcher and two research assistants after careful explanation of the objectives of the study. Data was collected immediately upon completion to ensure hundred percent recalls.

Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using frequency count and percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the analysis and discussion of the data obtained through the questionnaire from the respondent that constitute the study. This analysis is based on the four research questions raised in chapter one and the hundred (100) questionnaires

sampled. Simple percentage is the statistical method employed for the analysis of data. The results of the findings are presented in the table below;

SECTION A: BIO DATA

Percentage Distribution of Sex

Sex	Number of respondent	Percentage
M	38	38
F	62	62
Total	100	100

The data above reveals that the total population of hundred (100) used for the study, males constituted 38% and the females constituted 62%. This is in concord with the desired sample for the study.

Percentage Distribution of Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
14 – 19	25	25
20 – 24	53	53

25 years and above	22	22
Total	100	100

From the above table, the number of respondents within the range of 14 – 19 yrs was 25 and which also represents 25% of the entire sample. Respondents within the age range of 20 – 24 yrs were 53 in number which represented 53% of the sample. Respondents within the age range of 25 years and above were 22 in number and it represented 22 percent of the entire sample.

Research Question 1: Knowledge and attitude of Parents towards sexuality education

S/N	ITEMS	YES%	NO%	MAYBE%
1.	Are your parents knowledgeable about the Topics typically covered in sexuality Education programs in your school?	54	30	16
2.	Do your parents feel well informed about the goals and objectives of sex education in your school?	46	27	27
3.	Do your parents understand the importance Of teaching consent as part of sex education	68	16	16

In your school?

4.	Have your parents explained the concept of consent and building healthy relationships to you?	53	40	7
5.	Are your parents aware of the resources available to support parents in discussing sex education topics with their children?	39	33	28
6.	Do your parents believe sex education is important for adolescents?	51	16	33
7.	Are your parents comfortable discussing topics related to sex and sexuality with you and your siblings?	21	70	9
8.	Do your parents support the inclusion of comprehensive sex education in school curriculum?	77	18	5
9.	Your parents should play a role in teaching you and your siblings about sex?	74	14	12
10.	Are your parents open to collaborating with schools to ensure you receive adequate sex education?	61	30	9

From the above, 54% of students believe their parents are knowledgeable about the topics typically covered in sexuality education programs, 30% of students don't believe their parents are knowledgeable about sex education while 16% of students are not sure about the knowledge of their parents in regards to sex education. 46% believe that their parents are well informed of the goals and objectives of sex education and 27% said their parents are not while 27% don't are not sure.

Research Question 2: Knowledge and attitude of Teachers towards sexuality education

S/N	ITEMS	YES%	NO%	MAYBE%
11.	Have your teacher received specialized training related to teaching sex education?	43	30	27
12.	Is your teacher adequately prepared to teach sexuality education?	38	34	28
13.	Does your teacher possess a comprehensive understanding of the topics included in sex education curriculum for secondary school?	43	19	38
14.	Is your teacher familiar with evidence-based approaches and best practices for teaching sex	43	13	44

education?

15. Is your teacher knowledgeable about the legal and ethical considerations associated with teaching sex education?	57	13	30
16. Does your teachers feel confident discussing sex education topics with students?	51	28	21
17. Does your teacher believe that teaching sex education is an essential part of student's overall education?	74	10	15
18. Does your teachers believe discussing sex and sexuality helps in preventing issues like teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections?	87	10	3

From the above table, majority of the respondents believe their teachers have the right knowledge and attitude towards the teaching of sex education. The respondents agrees to the fact that their teachers are well informed and have the right attitude in teaching sex education as 70% agrees, 18% disagree while 12% are not sure.

Research Question 3: Knowledge and attitude of students towards sexuality education

S/N	ITEMS	YES%	NO%	MAYBE%
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19. Do you feel you have a good understanding of the topics typically covered in sex education classes?	67	14	19
20. Are you familiar with basic concepts related to sexual health and reproductive anatomy?	92	4	4
21. Do you understand the importance of practicing safe sex and using contraceptives?	90	8	2
22. Are you aware of the potential consequences of engaging in risky sexual behaviours?	94	4	2
23. Have you received information about sexual consent and healthy relationships in sex education?	62	28	10
24. Do you believe learning about sex and sexuality is important for your well-being?	96	4	0
25. Do you feel supported by your school in understanding sexuality education topics?	73	18	9
26. Do you think sex education helps you make informed decisions about your sexual health?	76	17	7
27. Are you willing to engage in sexual discussions with your peers and teachers?	60	27	13
28. Do you feel comfortable discussing sex and sexuality education topics in class?	72	22	6

From the above table, 90% of the respondent are fully aware of the importance of teaching sex education and the right attitude to adopt. While 8% of the respondent are not aware of the importance of sexuality education, 2% don't have any idea or prior knowledge of sexuality education.

Research Question 4: Impact of religion and religious beliefs on the attitude towards sexuality education

S/N	ITEMS	YES%	NO%	MAYBE%
29.	Do your religious beliefs influence your view on sex education?	85	13	2
30.	Do you believe discussion about sex education should include perspectives from different religious background?	78	13	13
31.	Do you think schools should consider religious sensitivities when teaching sex education?	71	24	15
32.	Do you feel conflicted between your religious beliefs and the necessity of teaching sex education?	40	47	13
33.	Do you believe your religious community	64	22	14

support the teaching of sex education in schools?

From the above table, it was found that religion and religious beliefs affected the attitude of 85% of the respondents towards sex and sexuality education, 78% believed that sex education should include perspectives from different religious backgrounds. Furthermore, 40% of the respondents reported that they experience conflict between their religious beliefs and the teaching of sex and sexuality education. Another 64% of the correspondents believed that religious communities should support the teaching of sex and sexuality education in schools.

Discussion of Findings

Sex and sexuality education has been a well contested topic in regards to its adoption in the school teaching curriculum most especially in more conservative countries like Nigeria. It is met with resistance on the home front, religious and cultural fronts. However, in the present era where rapid adoption of more flexible sexual statuses are carried out daily, it is even more important to carry out sex and sexuality education in schools, for the protection and security of school children and children of vulnerable ages.

The focus of this study was to elucidate that origin and evolution of sex and sexuality education, as well as discuss the challenges of carrying

out sex and sexuality education considering the cultural, societal and religious factors that might serve as a barrier to the same.

There were a total of 100 correspondents during the course of this study. 38% (38) of the correspondents were male while 62% (62) of the correspondents were female. These figures correspond to the desired amount of correspondents required for this study based on the sample size calculations.

25% of the correspondents were aged between the ages of 14-19, while 53% of the correspondents were aged between the ages of 20-24 years. 22% of the correspondents were aged 25 years and above.

In response to the distributed questionnaires, this study found that 54% of the correspondents believe that their parents are knowledgeable about the topics typically covered in sexuality education programs. reflecting a rather average knowledge level of the topic. Furthermore, it was found that 30% of the correspondents in this study believe that their parents aren't knowledgeable about sex education. This study reported that 16% of the correspondents are not sure about the knowledge of their parents as regards sex education. When asked about how well informed their parents are about the goals of sexuality education, 46% of the correspondents believed that their parents are well informed of the goals of sex and sexuality education, 27% believed their parents were not and 27% were not sure.

The knowledge and attitude of the teachers, as perceived by the students, towards teaching sex and sexuality education was also vital to the study. 70% of the correspondents in this study agreed that their teachers had right knowledge and attitude towards sex and sexuality education reflecting a high level of knowledge of the topic, 18%

disagree and 12% are not sure about their teachers' knowledge and attitude towards sex and sexuality education.

The knowledge and attitude of the correspondents themselves (the students) was another core information regarded during the course of this study. It was found that 90% of the respondents are fully aware of the importance of teaching sex and sexuality education and adopted the right attitude towards it. On the other hand, 8% of the correspondents were not aware of the importance of sex and sexuality education. 2% do not have any idea or knowledge of sex and sexuality education.

This study also observed the impact of religious beliefs on the attitude of the correspondents towards sex and sexuality education. 85% of the respondents reported that their religious beliefs affected and influenced their views on sex and sexuality education. On the other hand 13% reported that their religious beliefs did not influence their views on sex and sexuality education. Also, 71 % of the respondents reported that they believe schools should consider religious sensitivities when teaching sex and sexuality education, while 24% of the respondents didn't think so. Furthermore, 40% of the respondents reported feeling conflicted between their religious beliefs and the necessity of teaching sex and sexuality education, while 47% reported feeling no conflict on the matter. Interestingly, 64% of the respondents believed that religious communities should support the teaching of sex and sexuality education in schools and 22% of the correspondents were of the notion that religious communities should not encourage the teaching of sex and sexuality education in schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Functional education, a major factor in the development process, to be relevant, must help appropriately an individual to understand his/her own culture and integrate into the other cultures, foreign or local, for the proper enhancement of his/her ways of life. Unfortunately

since the inception of sexuality education, the Nigerian educational system has not succeeded in helping the student to understand the implications of their sexuality upon their social and sexual well being at the micro level and population trends at the micro level because, sexuality education is still being perceived as “sex” education which has the capacity to encourage sexual espionage and promiscuity among the youth. Hence sexuality education has made very little progress in Nigerian schools. Will sexuality education therefore go into oblivion? This is a question that only time can answer.

The objective of sexuality education is to promote the proper development of personality, sexual well-being and quality of life of the population as a whole and thus implies that its contents cover all aspects of life in society, namely economic, political, social, legal, health, cultural and spiritual, making sure that both individual and collective interests work in harmony for the goodness of individuals and the society as a whole.. This concept of education derives its contents from a vision of the world which incorporates aspects of cultural, cosmological, theological, biological, economical, political and psychological repertoires of knowledge.

Traditional forms of education are losing more and more importance in the present context of development of the Nigerian society. The penetration of market economy into rural areas has led to a partial destruction of the traditional social structures. The improvement in school enrolment separates the children from their families for most of the day thereby limiting educational guidance of the family and the community especially with regards to sexual and family life issues. For example, initiation ceremonies have been greatly reduced and emptied of its original meaning but government’s

development strategies to change these traditional practices have been met with cultural and religious opposition. The efforts of various NGOs concerning sexuality issues are constantly thwarted. It is paramount for us to know that the introduction of Sexuality Education is a way of finding a new balance between the individual and ideology, economics, politics, environment, culture and ethics corresponding with present conditions. This is what I believe that sexuality education in Nigeria is seeking to achieve.

Positive and realistic guidance to adolescent boys and girls on sexual behaviour is very essential. The foundation of good sexual ethics can be laid in schools through the study of sexuality education in which the children learn to appreciate each other as personalities, to treat everyone with consideration and never to treat anyone callously or contemptuously. The way we are, the things we value, the things we do, our relationship with people and so on revolve around the nature of our personality and our type of environment.

Conclusion

Whenever we interact with people, we use specific life skills that give impressions about us. For example, the way we manage our anger, share information or express our desire will depend largely on life skills which ought to have been acquired during the process of socialisation or learnt at school, especially through sexuality education (Adepoju, 2005).

At the conceptualisation level of sexuality education, appropriate stakeholders such as religious leaders, community leaders, parents, teachers, educational administrators, the media and so on ought to be involved in the process of determining the content and orientation of

sexuality education. That this was not done prior to the introduction of sexuality education in the Nigerian education system is a major shortcoming which should be redressed.

The apparent rejection of sexuality education by some concerned groups was re-echoed in THISDAY publication of Wednesday, 12 January, 2005 under the caption: “Group Condemns Sex Education in Lagos Schools” and in the Muslim’s submission at the on-going National Political Conference, Abuja where the Chairman of Jamatu-Wasril-Islam condemned in strong terms government’s support for the sexuality education programme. In his words, he said: “We need religious education but they gave us sexuality education” Channels News Broadcast at 10 O’clock March 3, 2005)

Recommendations

- Reanalyse the content of sexuality education in Nigeria
 - Re-conceptualise the content of sexuality education for Nigeria
 - Re-sensitise the population about sexuality education in Nigeria
 - Design and provide appropriate and affordable educational resource materials
 - Train sexuality education handlers
 - Design and implement out-of-school programmes in sexuality education
- In so doing, we can begin to realise the goals and objectives of sexuality education in the country.

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