

INFLUENCE OF SEX EDUCATION ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL BIOLOGY STUDENTS IN OYO METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of sex education on sexual behaviour among secondary school biology students in Oyo metropolis. Two hundred (200) students in four randomly selected senior secondary schools in Oyo town were used as the subjects of investigation. Their responses to the validated questionnaire were analysed using a descriptive statistics of percentage and inferential statistics of chi-square. The result of the investigation showed that if students are properly educated on sex education, sexual immorality among secondary school students will be reduced. The result also revealed that most parents were not discussing sexual issues with their children at home. This calls for the inclusion of sex education into biology curriculum in secondary schools so that students can be adequately informed about relevant behaviour to put up towards opposite gender and be acquainted with the danger inherent in having indiscriminate sexual intercourse. School authorities and non-government organisations should make it a point of duty to organise workshops and seminar on sex education for secondary school students.

Background to the Study

According to the National Policy on Education (2004), which was specified in Nigeria's philosophy of education, education is an instrument for national development and fosters the worth and development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen, for each individual's sake, for the full integration of the individual into the community and for the general development of the society. The national educational goals derived from the philosophy include among others, the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society (Nwakonobi & Onwuachu, 2009).

These national goals and philosophy of education can only be achieved through a well-planned curriculum. Uga (1990) sees curriculum as the total situation through which the school makes behavioral changes

in those who pass through it. He also opines that curriculum is the deliberate, systematic and planned attempts made by the school to change the behavior of members of the society in which it situates. Wheeler (1980) defines curriculum as the planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school, while Tyler (1986) sees curriculum as all of the learning of students which is planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goals.

Sex education is seen as the transmission of appropriate sex based knowledge, values, attitudes and roles to children (Anameze, 2002). It seeks to teach boys and girls the physiological functioning and use of sex organs and the expected roles of each sex organ. In the past, people thought sex and sexuality only to mean sexual intercourse, whereas they embrace species, growth and development of human body including physical, physiological, and

emotional changes of all sexual behaviors (Nwakonobi & Onwuachu, 2009).

Reproduction is an essential feature of life on earth. The continual existence of human being as a whole depends on the reproductive process i.e. sexual intercourse between man and woman, which is ordained for adults and not adolescents as it has become rampant these days. The teenage years (12-18) are the years of adolescence when teenagers are easily excited sexually because of the biological changes in their bodies, including production of sex hormones. The teenage years are also the period when the average adolescent is in post-primary school in Nigeria. It is the period when the adolescent bubbles with a lot of energy and wants to be recognised or heard and feels he/she can handle problems all alone and may not need the advice of older persons. Sex education before the attainment of puberty could equip boys and girls to develop the right attitude in adolescence that will equip them for challenges of growing up and becoming effective citizens that could be integrated into the society.

Sexual behaviour of adolescents is important not only because of the possible reproductive outcomes but also because of risky sexual acts, such as unprotected sex and low and inconsistent use of a condom during sexual intercourse have been associated with HIV infection. Jolley (2001) noted that there is a need for more information regarding safe sex which not only educate adolescents about how to avoid an unwanted pregnancy but also will prepare them to know how to be protected from sexually transmitted infections and HIV. In the Nigerian context, sex education is regarded as a taboo that should not be mentioned in the public. The little knowledge of sex education that a teenager is to acquire before marriage is expectedly given by the parent of the same sex. A survey

of women and livelihood in the Niger Delta by Sofri (1987) revealed that unfortunately, most parents in Nigeria due to cultural and traditional norms found it difficult to engage or involve their children who are of adolescent age in sex and sexuality education. These cultural and traditional norms are so strong that the children may not be able to know the proper names of their sex reproductive organs (Salami, 2015). According to Ekeng, Ekanem and Esien (2014), this lack of knowledge is due to cultural inhibitions whereby the parents use coined words to refer to the male and female sex organs. Very often, the knowledge of the children about the utility of their sex organs is limited to urination. Hence, when their bodies begin to show sexual sensations at adolescence, the adolescents become confused and then dare to try to use it for sexual activities (Salami, 2015). In certain situations according to Ekeng et al, (2014), adolescent girls may not be able to refuse sex. Result of a study of adolescent sexuality in Ibadan showed that 43.9% of in-school adolescents with single parents did not know that pregnancy could result from first coitus (Oyediran, Ishola, & Adewuyi, 2003). The visible consequences of teenage sexual behaviour in Nigeria are high rates of out-of-wedlock pregnancies among adolescents, abortions, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) which increase the risk of HIV infections (Archibong, 1991; Arowojolu, Ilesanmi, Roberts & Okunola, 2002). In Calabar (Cross River state), 72% of patients admitted to hospitals for complications of abortion were aged 12-20 years (Archibong, 1991).

Adepoju (2005) reported that in recent time, the youth who constitute ages 10 – 24 years and 36.7% of the Nigerian population are found to be highly vulnerable to antisocial behaviours such as violent, crimes, unsafe sexual activity and drug abuse among others. The Nigeria

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Association for the Promotion of Adolescent Health and Development (NAPAHD) alerted that a hospital based research has shown that 80% of patients with abortion complications are adolescents. The assertion was based on the fact that over 16% of teenage females reported first sexual intercourse by age 15 while 8.5% of boys of age 15 have also had their first encounters. The emotional and psychological imbalance and inability to control the urge to sex after their first encounter made majority of these youth to proceed in the wrong activities due to poor or lack of information and knowledge about the implication of their behaviour on their sexual health and general welfare of the nation. Many of our secondary school students fall victim of the above, who could have used the natural and God-given gift of strength and ability to engage in sexual immorality and contracted the spread of STD such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, and even HIV/AIDS.

A strong concern of adults about the moral behaviour of young is their sexual behaviour. Observation on some students showed that they lacked knowledge of sex education from their various homes, because many parents are inadequate in this aspect, due to the culture and ethic of the land. Parents do not normally count sex education as part of their duties to their young ones, some considered it immoral to teach or engage young ones on discussions about sex, even teachers do not discuss sex education well when teaching related topics e.g. reproduction, only the organs and functions are taught (Michael, Ganon, Laiman&Kolata, 2005). Hence, students rely on their own initiatives and what they learn from friends and peers which entangle students into emotional stress. In the past, Africans are said to be natural and unsophisticated to sex but today civilisation has made us to be influenced by the western culture, resulting in various social vices such

as abortion, raping and prostitution etc.

The evolution of sexuality education in Nigeria initial efforts to introduce sexuality issues in the Nigeria education system was done through the introduction and institutionalisation of population education 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. Sex education is the encompassed education about all aspects of sexuality including information about family planning, reproduction (fertilisation, conception, and development of the embryo and foetus through to childbirth) plus information about all aspects of one's sexuality including body image, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, values, decision making, communication, dating relationships, sexual transmitted infections (STIs), how to avoid them and birth control method (Michael,*et al.*,2005).

Okenwa (2005) recommended that HIV/AIDS education should be taught in school from primary to tertiary level in order to prepare the mind of youth against the dangers of sexual transmitted disease. It is observed that the high spread of the epidemic is by sexual intercourse which results from ignorance of sex education of the students from their various homes and in school. Sex education in schools, in addition to what parents expectedly teach adolescents at home will go a long way in helping them to overcome the stress of the period. Unfortunately, the Nigerian biology curriculum does not contain any topic on sex education. Instead, the areas covered are on courtship behaviour in mammals and population and family planning (FGN, 2009). The implication is that the Nigerian adolescent gathers information from peers and probably from mass media. Such information could be misleading to the adolescent. The need to educate secondary

school biology students on sexeducation is the focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Sexual immorality which could be an abomination in the society is now a shameless activity among our youth hence the rate of unwanted pregnancy, rape, unsafe sex, abortion, prostitution, fornication, misuse of contraceptive have drastically increased among youths. This attitude has to be corrected in order to enhance their health statuses, protect their lives and thus be able to contribute their quotas to national development.

Aim of the Study

This research is aimed at studying the influence of sex education on sexual behaviour among secondary school biology students in Oyo metropolis. This will in turn crave the need for the inclusion of sex education into biology curriculum as an antidote to curbing sexual immorality among secondary school students, which will unequivocally enhance development in the Nigeria post primary education.

Significance of the Study

The importance associated to this research is great in that sex is a subject that students are naturally serious about and so this study will definitely provide enthusiasm (strong feeling of admiration) for readers and students when the subject is logically presented by the teachers.

This research is also significant to government as sex education when taught in schools will aid in reducing and controlling population growth, unwanted pregnancy, motherless babies and spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

Above all, the knowledge of sex education will help to prepare the young ones (students) for happy marital life (understanding fully the importance

attached to virginity in marriage) in future, thereby reduces divorce and single parent in our society.

Hypotheses

- i. There is no influence of peer group on sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis
- ii. There is no influence of biology teachers' discussion on sex education about sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis.
- iii. There is no influence of biology students' prior knowledge on sex related issues and sex education taught in biology class in Oyo metropolis

Materials and Methods

Research Design

A sample survey, using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaires developed by the researcher was chosen in studying the inclusion of sex education into biology curriculum as a way of curbing sexual immorality among the youth mostly the senior secondary school students.

Population of the study

The population for the research was the entire senior secondary school students of Oyo town. This appeared too large for the researcher to cover, hence population of the study was randomly selected from four mixed secondary schools in Oyo town, and they are:

- i. Ojongbodu Grammar School
- ii. Olivet Baptist High School
- iii. Ladigbolu Grammar School
- iv. Isale-Oyo Community Grammar School

Study Sample and Sampling Techniques

For the purpose of this study, two hundred students (male and female) were

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randomly selected as samples by the researcher with the assistance of the school teachers. In each of the aforementioned schools, fifty students were randomly selected. The researcher ensured that the students selected for the purpose were within the age range of 16 – 18 year old in the senior secondary school.

Research Instrument

The Instrument for data collection for this research work was a well-structured, self-explanatory questionnaire. Questions were stated in form of statements to which participants agreed or disagreed, based on a four-point Likert scale ranging from A=Agreed, SA=Strong agree D=Disagreed to SD=Strongly disagree.

Informed consent was sought from the Principals and biology teachers of the participating schools before the administration of the questionnaire.

Validity of the Instrument

The face and content validity of the

instrument was carried out by expert in the department of biology education Emmanuel Alayande College of Education Oyo. The research instrument was pilot tested among senior students to ascertain its reliability before the administration was done in the randomly selected secondary schools.

Analysis of Data

The data collected were subjected to descriptive statistics of percentages and inferential statistics of chi-square (X^2) which is to test the hypotheses (research questions) from the questionnaire

Results

The result obtained from the analysis of the data collected from the respondents is presented below, based on the initial stated hypotheses. Hypothesis one states that, “There is no influence of peer group on sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis”.

TABLE 1: Peer Groups' Influence on the Sexual Behaviour among Biology Students in Oyo Metropolis

SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	TOTAL	X ² Cal	Df	X ² Tab	REMARK
50 (25.0)	20 (10.0)	90 (45.0)	40 (20.0)	200	22.578	4	9.488	S
28 (14.0)	20 (10.0)	100 (50.0)	52 (26.0)	200				
90 (45.0)	60 (30.0)	30 (15.0)	20 (10.0)	200				
20 (10.0)	10 (5.0)	100 (50.0)	70 (35.0)	200				
100 (50.0)	30 (15.0)	30 (15.0)	13 (6.5)	200				

Table 1 shows that the calculated chi square ($X^2_{cal.}$)-22.578 is greater than tabulated chi square ($X^2_{tab.}$) value-9.488. Hence the null hypothesis 1 is rejected. This implies that, there is influence of peer group on sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis and could trigger sexual immorality among biology students. This is evident in the manner at which sex related

issue learnt on social media and home videos are freely discussed among peer group.

Table 2 presents the result of the tested hypothesis 2 which states; “There is no influence of biology teachers' discussion on sex education about sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis.”

Table 2: *Biology Teachers' Discussion on Sex Education about Sexual Behaviour among Biology Students in Oyo Metropolis.*

SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	TOTAL	X ² Cal	Df	X ² Tab	REMARK
50 (25.0)	39 (19.5)	81 (40.5)	30 (15.0)	200	9.488	4	5.881	S
20 (10.0)	13 (6.5)	100 (50.0)	67 (33.5)	200				
52 (26.0)	50 (25.0)	50 (25.0)	48 (24.0)	200				
72 (36.0)	90 (45.0)	20 (10.0)	18 (9.0)	200				
38 (19.0)	20 (10.0)	72 (36.0)	70 (35.0)	200				

Table 2 shows that the calculated chi square (X²cal.) 9.488 is greater than the tabulated chi square (X²tab.) 5.881. This indicates that the hypothesis is rejected which implies biology teachers' discussion on sex education on sexual behaviour among biology students in Oyo metropolis has greater influence on the students. This can curb sexual immorality and vices related to sexuality.

Table 3 shows the result of the tested hypothesis 3, which states that, "There is no influence of biology students' prior knowledge on sex related issues and sex education taught in biology class in Oyo metropolis".

Table 3: *Influence of Biology Students' Prior Knowledge on Sex Related Issues and Sex Education Taught in Biology Class*

SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	TOTAL	X ² Cal	df	X ² Tab	REMARK
70 (35.0)	54 (27.0)	40 (20.0)	36 (18.0)	200	25.328	8	15.507	S
90 (45.0)	48 (24.0)	32 (16.0)	30 (15.0)	200				
30 (15.0)	15 (7.5)	100 (50.0)	55 (27.5)	200				
50 (25.0)	22 (11.0)	48 (24.0)	80 (40.0)	200				
12 (6.0)	40 (20.0)	78 (39.0)	70 (35.0)	200				
40 (20.0)	40 (20.0)	30 (15.0)	90 (45.0)	200				
54 (27.0)	100 (50.0)	30 (15.0)	16 (8.0)	200				
28 (14.0)	20 (10.0)	52 (26.0)	100 (50.0)	200				
40 (20.0)	38 (19.0)	100 (50.0)	22 (11.0)	200				

Table 3 shows a calculated chi square (X²cal.) value of 25.328 is greater than tabulated chi square (X²tab.) 15.507, indicating that the hypothesis is rejected, meaning that without sex education being taught in class students' knowledge about

sex related issues is not adequate enough, hence sex education has to be included in the lesson. For instance, the descriptive statistics also shows that most students do not know that having sex once could result in pregnancy.

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Discussion of Finding

The objectives of the concepts of population education and sexuality education are basically to create awareness and promote understanding of population issues directly related to socio-cultural and sustainable economic development. Sex education seeks further to promote sustainable development of personality through the acquisition of factual knowledge. Population education already established these objectives among the tertiary institution students who are far matured than the secondary school students.

The inclusion of sex education into senior secondary school biology curriculum will enhance the implementation of the objectives of the concept of sexuality education. And among other thing serves as a way of curbing sexual immorality among students. This is supported by the finding of Ekeng et al, (2014). The findings in agreement with the works of Anameze, (2002), Adepoju, (2005) and Ekeng et al, (2014), have shown that peer group had a greater influence on the sexual behaviour of biology students mostly by discussing sexual related matters freely in the school. Even group member may be asked if they have boyfriend(s) or girlfriend(s) and if they are still a virgin etcetera. Such exposure changes their minds on what should be their focus at specific age. From the findings of this study, sex education discussed by both the parents and teachers will help to debug the wrong information from peer group. This is deviating from the assertion of Nwakonobi & Onwuach (2009), in which most parents (92.38%) are of the view that sex education be taught in schools and not left in their hands since 88.1% of them feel shy discussing sex issues with their children.

Sex experiences may be shared with students to get first-hand information on when it is good to engage in such act. In the past such discussion was classed as a taboo

or traditional hazard but now it would be necessary for parent to discuss the sex issues with their teenagers since there is several unfiltered Information reaching them via the internet and among peers group.

In agreement with the work of Salami (2015), most secondary school biology students in Oyo metropolis have been updated wrongly as regards sex education by their peer group and this has led them into much sexual immorality where they endangered their life with wrong motives as they prefer their peer as confidant on sexual related issues. Most students are wrongly advised when related to their peer group, even majority of them do not see kissing as the genesis of sexual immorality, to this end sex education has to be given more attention to concretise the knowledge of the students both at home and in the school.

Furthermore, teachers are expected to teach the students and develop them in all things (sexual education is not left out) in the school. The school teacher can discuss some sexual culture in order to curb the act of sexual immorality among the students, also it is observed that the students may not like to discuss such with their teachers but teachers and school counsellors are to add to their activities interest of curbing and correcting the students and help them not to endanger their life.

The study further revealed that sex education should be included in the senior secondary school biology curriculum as it is agreed by the students interviewed, that it will not corrupt their mind but will reveal the dangers inherent in having indiscriminate sex.

Conclusion

In view of the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

By not discussing with their teenagers about the issues related to sex, parents will allow the children/ward to

choose for themselves external confidant who will help to corrupt their thinking. It was deduced that the knowledge of the Nigeria teenager is not complete without sex education being taught.

Students do not want their teachers to intervene in their sex life but teachers have to find their way into the lives of these students and help in curbing sexual immorality among them. Sex education being included in biology curriculum will not corrupt but correct the motive of the students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

*Parents should be awake to the responsibility of discussing and chatting with their children at intervals on their sexual lifestyle and advise them accordingly rather than advise from peer group.

*Parents have to be morally sound and of good behaviour so as to have the moral justification to counsel their children or wards.

*School authorities and non-government organisations should make it a point of duty to organise workshop and seminars on sex education for students within age 12 – 20 years regularly.

*Strict discipline should be awarded to erring students by the school authority to serve as deterrent to others who also involved in sexual immorality.

*Workshops and Seminars should be organized to even educate both parents and teachers on sex education.

*Biology teachers should make adequately delivery of salient topics related to sex education, with great sense of seriousness.

*Various religious organisations should find ways of discussing sex and its implications with their youths

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