

Teachers Attitudes toward Teaching Sexuality Education to Secondary School Students in Numan Education Zone of Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract. The study examined the attitude of secondary school teachers towards teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone of Adamawa State. One research question and three research hypotheses were postulated for the study. This study adopted the descriptive survey research design, with a target population comprising 48 senior secondary schools and 474 senior secondary school teachers in Numan Education Zone. Twenty schools were selected by simple random sampling technique, while 10 teachers were selected from each of the schools by stratified sampling technique using sex and class taught as strata, totalling 200 respondents as sample size. The research instrument "Teachers Attitudes towards Teaching Sexuality Education" (TATSE) was adapted from Yakubu, Andrew and Kolawole (2015). The validity of the instrument was carried out by an expert in Guidance and Counselling Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University, Mubi. The reliability of the instrument was carried out in Government Day Secondary School, Mubi using test-retest reliability method and a reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. Data were administered and collected by the researcher on the spot. These were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, Standard Deviation and t-test analysis. The result from the findings of this study showed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers' attitudes towards teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone. It was also noted that there was a significant difference between married and single teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. Finally, the study asserted that there was a significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. Considering the finding of this study, it was concluded that sexuality education is desirable in our secondary schools, it was found that some teachers regardless of their gender and area of specialization have negative attitude toward teaching sexuality education. It was recommended that a curriculum of sexuality education should be drawn up for all secondary schools in Nigeria. Also, the government should train teachers specially to handle sexuality education in schools.

Keywords: Sexuality education, adolescents, teachers attitudes, reproductive health problems and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)

Introduction

Young people have the right to live healthy lives, and society has the responsibility to prepare youth by providing them with comprehensive sexual health education that gives them the tools they need to make healthy decisions. Sex education according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013) is the provision of information about bodily development, sex, sexuality, and relationships, alongside with skills-building to help young people communicate about and make informed decisions regarding sex and their sexual health. According to Schmidt, Abraham, and Kimberly (2015), sex education is the orientation given formally or informally for the purpose of making those receiving it develop the right attitude towards all sex related matters in human relations.

Healthy sexuality is fostered most effectively by those who view children's sexuality as part of who children are, their basic identity, rather than what they do. Acharya (2009) asserts that, the main goal of sexuality education is the promotion of sexual health by providing learners with opportunities to develop a positive and factual view of sexuality and indeed sexual health. This on the long run contributes in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. According to Madala (2004), sexuality which forms a central aspect of being human is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices, roles and relationships.

Agarwal (2003) was of the view that, the current general economic depression forced so many ladies including housewives and single parents into trading their bodies for money (commercial sex workers). He maintained that, this is being done to either supplement their meager financial resources or as a survival strategy. In addition, some parents, because of poverty, make use of their teenage daughters to earn money from willing and randy men. Under these prevailing circumstances various families, communities and the societies in general have rendered the religious, moral and cultural check to balance in matters concerning human sexuality. In modern times this initiative has failed to prevent the moribund situation.

Adolescence is a time when young people experience changes in their bodies among which is the development of new sexual feelings, which they may not understand. According to Njoku (2008), the incidence of adolescents engaging in sexual intercourse increases with age and the mean age at first sexual intercourse is 15 years among secondary school students aged 12 to 19. This is also the period when most of teenagers are in secondary schools. As a result, they need information and assurance about what is happening to them. Orji (2003) affirms that, the incidence of adolescent sexual activity in Nigeria is high and increasing, although adolescents are given little information for making informed decision about it. In the same vein, children and teenagers are exposed to a barrage of information related to sexuality which requires guidance from families and schools for healthy sexual development and responsible behavior.

Netsanet et al. (2012) view sex education as the 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. But the present educational system has forsaken the teaching of reproductive health and sexuality education among teens in secondary schools even in the content of health and family life education.

The concept of sex education in Nigerian schools is not new (Adepoju, 2005). Similarly, Abdu (2006) postulated that traditional form of sex education and family life education has been in existence where kinship systems, age grade and coming – of – age ceremonies or initiation ceremonies where the youths were tutored about manhood and womanhood. It was purely biological and cultural, while various methods of contraceptives were just kept at the domain of married people and kept secret. Many young people were kept in the dark as they were not opportune to be properly educated on family life and sex education because their training was on “dos and don'ts”.

Statistics from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) shows that the total number of students dropped out of secondary schools due to pregnancy related reasons were 6345 (MoEVT, 2010). To avert such problems, parents, particularly mothers have enormous roles to play in this regard since the home of the child is the first school of socialization. There is, therefore, the need that parents should socialize their children early enough to at least let them know when somebody touches them “in a bad way” but it is observed that the strong influence of culture and religion seems to make open discussion of sex related

matters a taboo and so, parents seem to shy away from their responsibility when it comes to discussions around sexuality.

Sex education is a broad term treated as a usual topic for health education and used to describe education about human sexual anatomy, reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, emotional relations, reproductive rights and responsibilities, abstinence, contraception and other aspects of human sexual behavior. They maintained that, recent discussion on problems of sexual immorality among adolescents' as well as harassment by adult has been topical issues in Nigeria. It seems most of the adolescent problems are initiated by sex and fertility behaviors. As a result, common avenues for sex education are parents or care givers, school programs and public health campaigns (Netsanet et al., 2012).

In Nigeria sexuality education was introduced into school curriculum because it is the need of the hour. Sexuality education attempts to provide right directional that aimed at disseminating knowledge about sex promotion of sexual and reproductive health for the purpose for the purpose of meeting the pressing need to raise the reproductive health information among young people so that they can be prevented from physical, psychological, martial and social problems related to sexuality. Despite the introduction of sexuality education in the curriculum for a decade, there is prevalence of diseases that are common due to ignorance of sexuality education like STI's including HIV/AIDS is high among adolescents at secondary schools. However, the fundamental question which most of the previous studies failed to address what is the attitudes of those who give message of sexuality education? Thus, there is need to carry out a study which aim at exploring the attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education. Therefore, this study would have addressed the attitudes of secondary school teachers toward teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone.

Research Question

What are the attitudes of teachers' toward teaching sexuality education in secondary school in Numan Educational Zone?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitudes toward teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of married and unmarried teachers towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone.
3. There is no significant difference between experience and less experienced teachers their on attitudes toward teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone.

Research Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population for this study comprised of 48 senior secondary school and 474 Senior Teachers in Numan Education Zone, which consist of Numan, Demsa, Guyuk, Lamurde, and Shelleng local government areas. The sample size of this study was 200. Twenty schools were selected by simple random sampling technique, while 10 teachers were selected from each of the schools by stratified sampling technique using sex and class taught as strata.

An instrument named "Teachers Attitudes toward Teaching Sexuality Education" (TATSE) was adapted from Yakubu, Andrew and Kolawole (2015). The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A contained the demographic data of the respondents which include name of school, gender, class taught, age, marital status and years of experience as a teacher. Section B contained items relating to the teaching of sexuality education. Responses

were on 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The scale was scored as SA-(4), A (3), D (2) and SD (1).

The face and content of the instrument was established by an expert in Guidance and Counseling, from the Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University, Mubi. The reliability of the instrument was carried out in Government Day Secondary School, Mubi using test-retest reliability method. First was administered on 30 teachers, while the second test was administered on the same set of teachers after two weeks. The reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. The researcher administered the questionnaire and collected the filled questionnaire back on the spot. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, Standard Deviation and t-test analysis.

Results

This chapter presents the data collected from the respondents in the study area. The data obtained from the field are provided here for further analysis to enable the researcher draw conclusion on the results of the analysis.

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone?

Table 1. Attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education in schools

| S/N | ITEMS | N | Mean | SD | Remark |
|-----|--|-----|------|------|----------|
| 1 | I am familiar with teaching of sex education | 200 | 3.62 | .836 | Accepted |
| 2 | I can teach sex education to my students | 200 | 2.89 | .657 | Accepted |
| 3 | Societal attitude to sex education is negative | 200 | 3.07 | .601 | Accepted |
| 4 | Sex education is contrary to the teaching of my religion | 200 | 1.78 | .736 | Rejected |
| 5 | Sex education should only be taught to female students | 200 | 1.54 | .553 | Rejected |
| 6 | Sex education should exclusively be taught to married people | 200 | 1.21 | .694 | Rejected |
| 7 | Sex education is detrimental to the moral haviour of students | 200 | 1.21 | .657 | Rejected |
| 8 | It is not my responsibility to teach sex education | 200 | 1.09 | .862 | Rejected |
| 9 | School is not the best place to teach sex education | 200 | 1.19 | .607 | Rejected |
| 10 | I often skip topics that are related to sex education while teaching | 200 | 1.22 | .321 | Rejected |
| 11 | I want sex education in my school | 200 | 3.62 | .546 | Accepted |
| 12 | Adolescents are more susceptible to sex education abuse when exposed to sex education | 200 | 1.39 | .842 | Rejected |
| 13 | Sexuality education makes students to make better decisions about their sexual and reproductive health | 200 | 3.12 | .837 | Accepted |
| 14 | I have no interest in sex education | 200 | 1.14 | .542 | Rejected |
| 15 | Sex education exposes students to sexual promiscuity | 200 | 1.44 | .480 | Rejected |
| 16 | Sex education should be introduced in the school curriculum | 200 | 2.52 | .813 | Accepted |
| 17 | Sex education will reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS among students | 200 | 2.78 | .776 | Accepted |
| 18 | Teaching of sex education is contrary to my religion | 200 | 1.30 | .863 | Rejected |
| 19 | Sex education is detrimental to the moral behaviour of the youths | 200 | 1.11 | .747 | Rejected |
| 20 | I don't like teaching sex education at all | 200 | 1.33 | .840 | Rejected |
| | Grand Mean | | 2.03 | | |

Note: * Accepted (\bar{x} - 2.5 and above); Rejected (\bar{x} = less than 2.5)

Table 1 shows the attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone. The result showed that most of the teachers were familiar with teaching of sex education (\bar{x} = 3.62), they also agreed to teach sex education their students (\bar{x} = 2.89). it was also noted that societal attitude to sex education is negative (\bar{x} = 3.07), so most of the students wanted sex education in their schools (\bar{x} = 3.62). It was a general believe

that sexuality education helps students make better decisions about their sexual and reproductive health ($\bar{x} = 3.12$). Majority of the respondents also solicited that sex education should be introduced in the school curriculum ($\bar{x} = 2.52$), as this will reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS among students ($\bar{x} = 2.78$).

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitudes towards teaching sexuality education secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone.

Table 2. T-test result of difference between the male and female teachers' attitudes towards teaching sexuality education

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | df | t-value | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|----------|-----|------|-------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| Male | 128 | 3.37 | 0.746 | 198 | .783 | 0.431 |
| Female | 78 | 3.26 | 0.822 | | | |

Note: *Significant ($P \leq 0.05$)

Table 2 above showed the difference between the male and female teachers' attitudes towards teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone. The male teachers have a mean of 3.37 while the female teachers have a mean of 3.26. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.431 is higher than the alpha value ($\alpha = 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers' attitudes towards teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference in the attitude of married and unmarried teachers towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone.

Table 3. T-test result of difference between married and unmarried teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | df | t-value | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------|-----|------|-------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| Married | 164 | 3.18 | 0.816 | 198 | 1.843 | 0.025 |
| Unmarried | 36 | 2.09 | 0.025 | | | |

Note: *Significance of $P \leq 0.05$

Table 3 above showed the difference between the married and unmarried teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. The married teachers have a mean of 3.18 while the unmarried teachers have a mean of 2.09. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.025 is lower than the alpha value ($\alpha = 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between married and unmarried teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone.

Hypotheses 3: There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers in their attitudes towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan Educational Zone.

Table 4. T-test result of difference between experienced and less experienced teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | df | t-value | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------------|-----|------|-------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| Experienced | 112 | 2.79 | 1.119 | 198 | 1.621 | 0.013 |
| Less Experienced | 88 | 3.18 | 0.645 | | | |

Note: *Significant ($P \leq 0$)

Table 4 above showed the difference between experienced and less experienced teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. The experienced teachers have a mean of 2.79 while the less experienced teachers have a mean of 3.18. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.013 is lower than the alpha value ($\alpha=0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone.

Discussion

The study found out that in assessing the attitudes of teachers towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Numan educational zone, it was found out that most of the teachers were familiar with teaching of sex education and they agreed to teach sex education their students. It was also noted that societal attitude to sex education is negative, however most of the teachers wanted sex education in their schools. It was a general believe that sexuality education helps students make better decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, therefore respondents also solicited that sex education should be introduced in the school curriculum, as this will reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS among students.

Furthermore, the study found out that there was no significant difference between the male and female teachers' attitudes towards teaching sexuality education in Numan Educational Zone. The male teachers have a mean of 3.37 while the female teachers have a mean of 3.26. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.431 is higher than the alpha value ($\alpha=0.05$). This could be attributed to the fact that there are other factors besides gender that significantly affects their perception and attitudes towards sex education in secondary schools. This finding is in accord with the findings Ugoji (2009) where she found out that there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female parents towards teaching of sexuality education in Delta State. This present finding equally supports that of Abubakar and Sa'idu (2014) which revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools of Kano State.

It was also noted that there is a significant difference between the married and unmarried teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. The married teachers have a mean of 3.18 while the unmarried teachers have a mean of 2.09. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.025 is lower than the alpha value ($\alpha=0.05$). This is in contrast to the result of Onoyase (2018) who found out that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of married and unmarried teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education.

Finally, the study found out that there is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers' attitude towards teaching of sexuality education in senior secondary school in Numan Educational Zone. The experienced teachers have a mean of 2.79 while the less experienced teachers have a mean of 3.18. The Sig. 2-tailed value of 0.013 is lower than the alpha value ($\alpha=0.05$). this is sync with the result of Onoyase (2018) who asserted that there was significant difference in the attitude of less experienced and experienced teachers towards

the teaching of sexuality education. The difference observed in the attitude of less experienced and experienced teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education may be due to the fact that some of the teachers have spent many years in the school and have become conversant with the patterns of adolescents' behaviour, their worries about their looks, their desires to experiment on new things and therefore see the need to furnish them with useful information for healthy development.

Conclusion

Considering the finding of this study, it was concluded that sexuality education is desirous in our secondary schools, it was found that some teachers regardless of their gender and area of specialization have negative attitude toward teaching sexuality education and this attitude is as a result of the ignorance of the teacher on what the content of sexuality education and possibly the influence of culture, and religion. In light of this, counselling as an educational helping relationship can use to equip teachers with right themes related to sexuality of education.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Public awareness campaigns should be organized by the government (at all levels) to sensitize members of the public (teachers inclusive) on the need for sexuality education, so that they can be receptive to it.
2. Religious leaders, through their various programmes in churches and mosques should enlighten their members especially the adults (including teachers) about the importance of sexuality education for adolescents in schools.
3. Non-governmental organizations should endeavour to meet with traditional rulers in various communities and emphasize on what adolescents stand to gain from sexuality education so that they can educate their subjects (including teachers) to embrace it.

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